

A TREATISE
of the Excellencie of a
Christian man, and how
he may be knowne.

P

Written in French by Maister Pe-
ter de La Place, one of the kings Coun-
sel, and cheife President of his court
of Aides in Paris.

Whereunto is adioyned a briefe
description of the life and death of the
said Author to the end that every one
may know what he was.

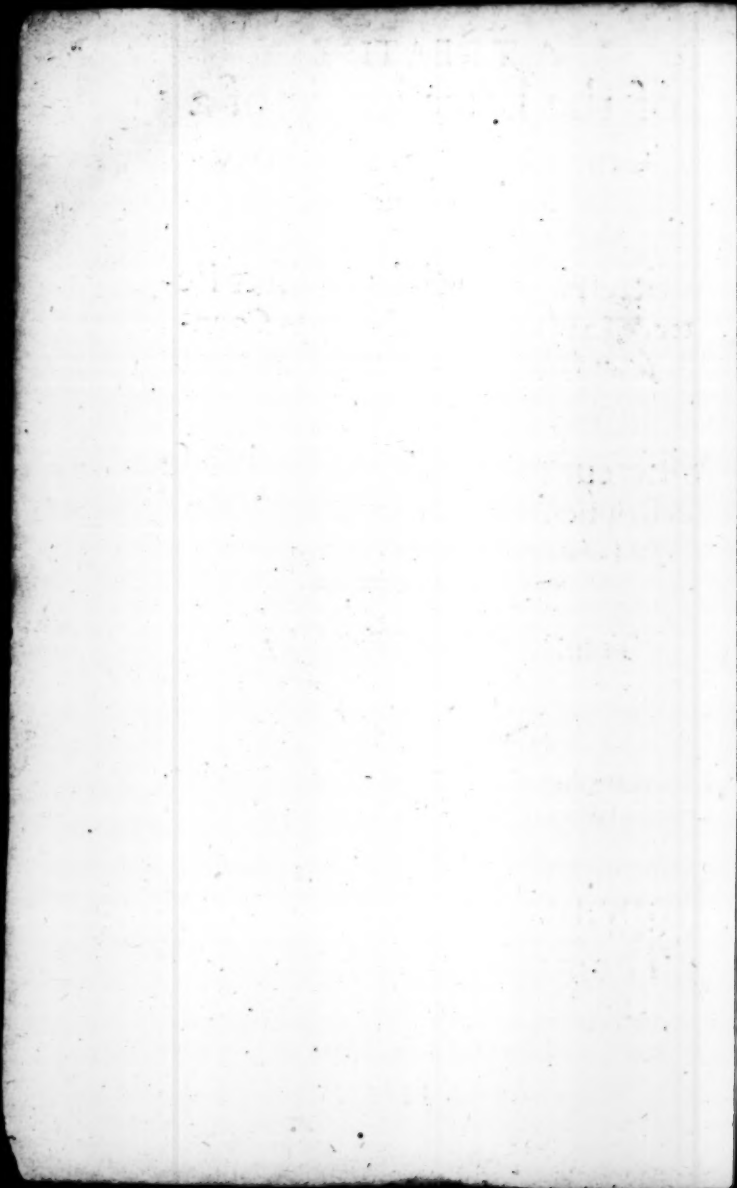
Translated into English by
L. T O M S O N.

MATTHEW. V.

Blessed are they which suffer persecution for righte-
ousnesse sake: for theirs is the kingdome of heauen:

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To the right worshipfull
Mistresse Vrsula Walsingham,
grace mercie and peace from
God the father, and from the
Lord Iesus Christ.

According as your worships pleasure was, I haue perused this booke, and as winde and weather would serue for passage, haue brought it out of Fraunce into England: The cause of your liking, cannot be misliked of any; and the iudgment of the right honourable my Maister, may stande as most grounded in trueth and iustice, whereby he sentenced him not onely to be of the Religion of Christ, but also truely a religious Christian. For surely, if I be not deceiued in iudgment, who so shal reade this booke, shall finde there was a Christ in the man, and such a Christ, as made him in deed a Christian, not for a day or two, not for faire and calme weather onely, but from the first beginning of his entrance into the knowledge of God, to his very last breath, in most sharpe and stormie tempests, as witnesseth his happie and blessed martyrdome, in that most horrible slaughter of the Saintes of GOD, on Barthelmewes day in Paris that wicked murderesse of Gods people, against whome their innocent blood cryeth to God for vengeance against the day of wrath. As he felt, so he wrote, and his feeling was with such spirituall vnderstanding, as that we may well see, he was

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one of them of whome hee wrote, and by so well knowing himselfe to his euerlasting comfort, gaue vs a waye to knowe our selues for the ioyous assurance of our saluation. The greatest comforte we haue, is to knowe that we are of the citie of God, and whosoeuer would honour vs the most, could not better performe it to our liking, then to assure vs we are the children of that heavenly father, brought into that honour and dignitie, by Christ that dyed for vs, and gaue himselfe for vs, and in whome wee dwell, and he in vs, if we deceiue not our selues. As for the comfort we might reape, by being made men, and not beastes, though it be great, and God is therefore greatly to be magnified, yet considering what God did for vs, and what we haue done against him, where he set vs by grace, and where we finde our selues through sinne and rebellion, we haue cause rather to sorowe, then to ioye, of heauinesse then of comfort: and in that respect, the veriest varlet & caitife that goeth vpon the earth hath as much to triumphe in, as hath the best man of God, the dearest child of our heavenly Father. For they are men, as well as we, made to the Image of God as well as we, haue as great light in them of naturall reason & vnderstanding, as we, witnesse the Heathen that neuer knewe God, nor worse sinners in Adam then we, but we as bad as they, both of vs for our sin and rebellion against him in that man Adam iustly blinded, iustly condemned. This the blinde wise Philosopher did not see, and this the obstinate Pelagian Papist at this day will not acknowledge, and therefore they both lift vp their heeles against God, haue wicked thoughts, and speake blasphemous wordes against heauen, and against their owne saluation.

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uation. And because this prerogative ouer other creatures, but equalitie of and in mankinde, had not that in it, that might in deede comferte the heart of man, but rather cast him downe, his minde and purpose was to lay forth the other to vs, which is proper to vs, I saye proper to vs, that are of the household of faith, of the common wealth of Israel, citizens of heauen, fellowe heires with Christ, the children of God; and I saye proper, because the Heathen and Barbarians, bee they neuer so wise, the Pelagians and Papistes, be they neuer so superstitiously deuoute, haue neither parte nor portion in it. And this is the preeminence, not to bee called, but to be a christian, which whosoener feeleth in himselfe with a right feeling of true vnderstanding, which neither of the two before named hath (for the one fighteth against the name of Christ, the other cannot abide to heare of any certaine perswasion and assurance of the conscience, that it is beloued of God, and that God is without doubt our father,) hath the greatest preeminence that man can haue vpon earth, and the greatest ioye and comfort that can be felt by man. All of vs at this day, in this part of the world, doe ioye in this name, Christian, and it is taken for the greatest dishonour that can be done to man, to say hee is no Christian: And yet sure it is, that euery man is not a Christian, that is called a Christian, euery man is not a Christian that is Christened, not euery one that sayth Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdome of heauen, no more then euery one that was circumcised, was a true Iewe, or all that descended of the race of Abraham, were true children to Abraham. There was amongst them Ismael, who per-

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Secured his brother, and yet was hee circumsise
there was Esau, whom the Lord hated, and yet wa
he circumcised: So are there heretikes amongst
vs, Christened, and yet not Christians: for neither
the cutting of of a peice of skinne in them, did
make them true Israelites, neither dipping in a
little water maketh these true Christians. Both of
these standeth in the spirit, not in the letter, in the
inwarde worke by grace and that of God, not in the
outward worke of man. So that he that hath this ho-
nourable name, to be called a Christian, hath more
cause to tremble then ro reioyce, vnlesse he haue a
sure testimonie both within and without, that hee
is indeede a Christian: for the abuse of Gods name
can auaille man nothing at all, nay it furthereth and
increaseth his condemnation, as a great credit com-
mitted to a seruant, and abused by that seruant, pro-
cureth greater displeasure. Howe we shall come to
the knowledge of this preeminence and Excellen-
cie, which is in vs, this booke sheweth, and because
it is so plainely and shortely set forth, I will not
stande here to make any discourse of it vnto your
worship: onely I most humbly beseech you to reade
the booke it selfe, and there shall you finde it so
well layd forth, as shalbe to your contentment and
comfort. I could very willingly haue beene content
to haue entred somewhat into the matter, but I
feare I should haue ouerslipped my selfe, for I must
needes confesse of my selfe, and to the glorie of God
I speake it, that I can easelier enter into it, then
come forth, so great comfort I receiue of the do-
ctrine, which is the chiefe part of the ioye of my
saluation. Were it not that I had good assurance, &
feeling of these markes which he setteth downe, and
are

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are indeede the true markes of our saluation, both in vs and to vs, that we are saued, I should despayre rather then hope, and bend my selfe wholly against God, then euer be subiect or submit my selfe to God. And therefore so oft as euer I enter into consideration of the wicked doctrines, which the reprobate and condemned Church of Antichrist, giueth out and teacheth, I find none so detestable as this point, that laboureth to take away from vs all perswasion of Gods loue towards vs, and of our most sure and certaine redemption by the blood of Christ. They cal it a presumptuous doctrine, a desperate doctrine, a doctrine that leadeth man to all kind of dissolutenes, an enemy to godlines of life and deuotion, a furtherer of all sensualitie, al lust, al wickednesse and rebellion against God. Though we are taught by the scripture, that none can beleue but such as are appointed to saluation, and none can receiue Christ, & beleue in his name, but they which haue this prerogative giuen them, to be the sonnes of God: though the Apostle say, Know ye not that the spirit of God dwelleth in you: and againe, The Temple of God is holy, which temple you are: though Christ himselfe say, Reioyce that your names are writtē in the book of life: and, Of those whom my father hath giuen me, I will not loose one. yet cease they not against so manifest truths of the spirit of God, and witnes of the Sonne of God, yea and euident speeches of God himselfe, to disgorge their blasphemies tending to the subuersion of soules, because they enuie at other mens saluation, not passing as seemeth by their doctrine, for their owne, though I iudge them not. Is it a presumption for a Christian man to saye as Christ hath commaunded vs, and taught vs to

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say, Our Father which art in heauen? Or may I say, Our father, in doubt, whether he be so or no? No man can call God his father but in faith, and faith is nothing but an vndoubted perswasion that we are beloued of God in Christ, beloued as children, because he gaue his sonne for vs, because he the righteous, died for me the vnrighteous, whereby as he became a sinner, by setting himselfe in my place, so doe I become righteous, in that that God setteth me in his place: And because our condition and state is such with God, Iesus Christ our Sauour willed vs in praying to pray thus, Our Father. For if this ground goe not before, we are lyers in so praying, Nay we blaspheme him in so praying, for he will not be called father of the reprobate, no more then he will accept the sacrifice of the wicked, whereof he saith by his Prophet, that it is an abomination to him, for our prayers are sacrifices, and if they bee the prayers of his children, then are they sweete smelling sacrifices: but if they be the prayres of the wicked and reprobate, then are they an abomination to the Lord. Doe we not euery one of vs, in the confession of our faith, saye, I belecue in God the Father? what doe we lie, when we say so? Or must we doubt when we say so? Well this is the doctrine of the enemies of God, the Papistes, who saye, it is presumption for any man to saye that he is saued. Then I say, it is presumption for any man to say, that he is the childe of God: then is it presumption for any man to say, that God is our Father: then is it presumption for any man to saye that he is a Christian: then is it presumption for any man to say in a good and true faith, I beleue in God. And so by this meanes shall the whole Catholike Church be
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condemned for charging vs to say so: then is Christ a lyer, and a maister of heresies in teaching vs to pray so: then doe we all wickedly to call and professe our selues Christians with such confidence as we doe. And seeing their profession and doctrine is so, that no man can assuredly say that God is his father, let them set it downe in flat termes, as they meane it, and let the stile of the confession of faith, and the Lords prayer goe as their doctrine is, after this sorte, I doubt in God the father almightie, I doubt in Iesus Christ, I doubt in the holy Ghost, and if thou which art in heauen be our father, hallowed be thy name, and so forth. What a diuelish doctrine is this? and yet it is the doctrine of the church of Rome: what a desperate doctrine is it? and yet it is the doctrine that we must confesse to be true, or else we be heretikes, we must be burned, we must be condemned. Christians I saye, must bee condemned, because they saye they are Christians, for it is nothing else we saye: we saye we are the children of God, that is an herisie, they say, and yet they will graunt vs to be Christians. A strange kind of Christian, that hath not the spirit of Christ, and if we haue the spirite of Christ, are we not children? The Apostle teacheth vs all this: why then, what is it else to say, we are Christians, then to say, we are the children of God? and is there any childe of God that is not saued? Paul sayeth, if sonnes, then heires, heires of the kingdome, yea fellowe heires with Christ. So then it is no more presumption to say, I am saued, then to saye, I am the childe of God: neither any more presumption to saye, I am the childe of God, then to saye, I am a Christian. Oh but say they, this doctrine maketh men despe-

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desperate : for if they stande vpon those termes once, that they are saued, they will care no more for good workes, they will abandon themselues to all kinde of sinne. In deede they say, as they feele, for if they felt what it were to haue this perswasion and ground, they would know, that as they are freed from sinne, so are they to liue in righteousness: The true Christian and childe of God, is more fearefull to sinne, because hee loueth God, and is beloued of God, then all the wicked are for feare of punishment. He knoweth and is perswaded, that as he is dead with Christ, so must he rise againe with Christ in newnesse of life, to liue after the spirit not after the fleshe, and that God hath prepared his wayes to walke in, which are good workes. If the liues of all men were looked into, it would easily appeare, where were the greatest abundance of sinne, whether in the true Christian who is a witnesse of the truth of this doctrine, or in the enemy of truth, which cannot abide this doctrine. And why can he not abide this doctrine? because he cannot abide to heare of the adoption of God, howe God hath adopted and taken vs to be his sonnes in Christ, before the foundation of the worlde was layed. And why so? Because they goe about to set vp their owne righteousness, and therefore will not be subiect to the righteousness of God. If we doe wel, because we are the children of God, and if we beleue, because we were appointed to saluation, then is it not our well doing that maketh vs to be Gods children: then are we not appointed to saluation, because we beleue: then are all their merits gone, then is all their fat in the fire. A Heathen, a Pharisee, and a Papist is no bodie, vlesse he may merite, vlesse

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vnlesse God may be bound to him, & not he to God: he will not take the kingdome of heaven of gift, he will haue it of duty, and that is no God a mercie to him. This is the very point of the matter, iudge now which is the presumptuous doctrine, either the heathenish Pharisaicall papistrie, or the trueth of the Gospell. But as I said, I can more easely enter into the matter then get out of it, the grossenesse of their heresie is so notorious and brutish, the truth of our doctrine so plaine and rich, that I cannot containe my selfe, if I should follow my selfe, I will therefore surcease and leaue your worship to the reading of the worke it selfe, which shall be sufficient to instruct you in the way of his trueth, and arme you against the assaults of Satan by these his Instruments. The Lorde by his holy spirit worke those two effects in you, for this present, so true and comfortable doctrine: and further leade you into all truth, as he is the God of truth, that in the day of the Lord Iesus, you may be founde to haue walked without stumbling in whatsoever he hath thought necessary to reueale vnto you for your saluation. 15. Sept. 1576.

*Your worships humbly as com-
mandemens. L. T.*

A brieft collection of the chiefest pointes of the life of maister Peter de la Place, *while he lived, Counſeler to the French King,* and chiefe Preſident in his Court of Aides, at Paris : ſet forth by P. de Farnace,



Though to iudge aright of any worke, we haue to conſider rather what the thing is in it ſelfe, then to ſtand much vpon the authour of it, becauſe, as truth is, the opinions wherewith we are before poſſeſſed, whether they be with or againſt ſ persons, ſtay vs from iudging ſyncerely of their doings: yet notwithſtanding it is a commendable cuſtome not only to ſet mens names before their bookes but alſo to ſet down what men they were, to the ende the reader may be the better prepared to taſte of the fruit whẽ he ſhal once vnderſtand what tree did beare it : for it is to be thought, that the fruit wil be like the tree that bare it. And therefore, ſeeing this worke came to mine hands, I was ſo bold to put forth this ſhort, but yet moſt true diſcourſe of the life and death of the wortheie man that made it : being otherwiſe thus minded, though this occaſion

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ration had not fallen out, that it were an iniurie to posteritie to suffer diuers thinges Ipe buried vnder silence which befell him in his life time, and are worthy perpetuall memorie.

Therefore to beginne at his byrth, Maister Peter de la Place, an Augoulesmian boyne, was so well trained vp in learnnig, euen from a childe, that he ouerly of all his brethren resolved with himselfe to followe the studie of the Lawes, wheretu he profited so marueylously, that before he was two and twentie yeeres olde, hee made a commentary vpon the title of Actions: and about the same time beganne to bee a common pleader in the Parliament of Paris, where he got him great commendation and prayse for excellencie of witte and eloquence in pleading, and especially for singular vprightnesse of conscience. For which cause also the deceased King Francis the great, did him this honour to choose him for his Aduocate and Attourney in his Courte of Aydes in Paris. In which office he behaued himselfe so well, that no man is able to bereaue him of this commendation, that hee kepte his handes continually cleane from byberie, and neuer did any thing against his office.

either

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eyther for vnbrideled ambition or coueteousnesse. King Henry the last, hauing sufficient testimonie of his good and vpright bearing of himselfe, in steade of continuing him in this office, chose him amongst a number of other to be his President in the said Court of Aides, and whilst he was in this office, it pleased God to call him to knowe him, about the yeere 1554, after a strange fashion.

About twentie yeeres before whilst hee was a student at Poictiers, it pleased God to make him see Maister Iohn Caluine, passing then that way with the Archbysshoppe of Tillit, whome he was content to heare speaking honourably of the knowledge of God in generall, but when he spake of the pure seruice of God, he made a staye there as one very zealous of that religion wherein he had been carefully brought vp. Yet so it was, that euen from that day, there remayned some scruple in his conscience, that it might well be, he might be deceiued, and that his minde ranne vpon oftentimes as he confessed afterwarde: which was as you would say, a preparatiue to nourish this litle seede, vntil it came to bud forth and spring, at such time as God had appointed it.

After

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After this it fell out on a day, that standing at his doore, there came a certaine stranger to him, by a wonderfull prouidence of God, whom he knewe not, but seeing him to be a man of some qualitie and one that wanted releife in his extreeme pouertie, turned to him very humbly, and made him a long discourse in excellent Latin vpon the cause of his miserie. And finding him to be a man well qualified, caused him to come in euem into his studie, to feele him the better to the bottome at his leasure. Then this pooze man, as one sent from God, began to discyfer out frankly vnto him all the abuses of the Popishe Church, and to teach him the true and onely way to serue God. And after he had heard him patiently, he rewarded him, and prayed him notwithstanding very earnestly to come no moze to him, so afraide he was of the fires which were prepared against them, which were suspected the least that might be for the doctrine of the Gospell: as in deede this pooze stranger, not long after, was tryed in the furnace at Paris.

But after this, Peter de la Place left not turning both the Scriptures and all the olde fathers, euem to the very scholemen, to finde some meanes if it were possible, to take away
this

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this scruple which trubled his mind day and night. By this meanes in shorthe space, God touched his heart, and opened his eyes, and caused him to behold the light of the Gospel: insomuch as after the death of King Frauncis the second, he declared himselfe openly to be of their number that made profession of the reformed Religion. And about that time put forth a treatise concerning our calling; to King Charles the ninth that dead is, and shorly after put forth another treatise in print, touching the right vse of Moral Philosophie, with the doctrine of Christ.

So that when the troubles encreased, for his owne safetie he departed from Paris, and withdrew himself to an house of his in Picardie: where all the time of the troubles hee gaue himselfe wholly to the studie of Diuinitie, as the onely and true Philosophie, (saide hee) which is able to minister to man true ioye and comforte in his griefes and miseries: and vsed oftentimes to exhor-te his familie to the feare of God, and exercised them in prayers. And some parte of his time also he gaue to write howe matters of Religion and the common wealth passed, diuers pieces whereof, vnwares to him were imprinted. Anno 1565.

When

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When these warres were ended, in the peere 62. he went and presented himselfe to the King, to purge himselfe of many false bzuities which certaine euill willers had cast out of him in the warre time: at what time, after that his Maiestie was satisfied with his answers for his defence, finding p^rlate Prince of Conde that dead is, in the Courte, hee went and did his duetie to him: who for his part, receiued him so courteously, that from that instant, he gaue him the charge, & made him ouerseer of all his households affaires, which hee tooke in so good parte, that in all matters that concerned his honour, he spared neither goods nor children, nor himselfe, so carefull he was of his seruice.

Five peeres after when the troubles began afresh, he withdrew himself againe, from Paris to the Castell of Ve in Valois, which belonged to his nephewes, by the right of Mistresse Ragonde Luillier his wife, to whom he was at that instant tutor. During the time of these warres he suffered great persecutions: but neither the losse of his office, nor the sale of his moueable goods, nor the fealing vpon his vnmoueable, troubled or disquieted him so much, as the discourtesies did which hee receiued at their handes, of
B whom

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Whome hee ought in courtesie haue reaped great hope of helpe, as of them that were neereſt to him in blood, amongeſt all which, I cannot let paſſe one vnſpoken of, who ſhewed himſelfe very barbarous and diſcourteous, and is a Counſeler of the Court, (howebeit I am content to conceale his name) and did once not onely knowe the trueth of the Goſpell, but that moze is, made open profeſſion of it, but after wardes forgoate himſelfe ſo farre, that he played as lewd a touch as might be with the ſaid La Place his kinſeman. For where as he profeſſed the religion, yea and that after the firſt troubles, perceiuing that God proued his children ſomewhat ſharply, he reuolted by and by, and ſeeing himſelfe in ſome danger by threats caſt out againſt them that had beene of the religion, to adoyde all ſuſpition of greiſe that he might conceiue for his reuolte, or of deſire to returne to the companie of good men, he purpoſed with himſelfe to commit ſome notorioꝝ acte, as he forthwith perfourmed it in ſlaundring and giuing forth the worſt ſpeeches he coulde, againſt this Peter de la Place, taking this occaſion which I will tell you, to make ſome ſhew of his doing.

Peter de la Place, was tutour to his nephewes,

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phewes, which were children to this Coun-
sellers wife, and had, as I saide befoze, with-
drawen himself to a certaine Castle of theirs.
Whereupon this Counseler ceased not by way
of sundry slaunderous requestes and suppli-
cations, to forge and put into the heades of
the Court of Parliament a thousande lewde
and wicked practises and slaunderous repro-
ches: insomuch as it caused the saide La
Place, while he was absent and knewe no-
thing of these matters, not onely to be dis-
charged of the office of his tutorship, to his
great reproche, but also gate forth a com-
mission to get him possession of the saide Ca-
stle, and to arrest the saide La Place. Which
no doubt had beene executed in so unhappie
and troublesome a time, considering what
diligence hee caused Tanchou and his Ar-
chers to make, as if they had gone about
the taking of some thiefe and murderer: had
not God raised vp a friend, who came a night
befoze and tolde him of the whole matter.
Whereupon though he were in a continuall
burning ague, yet he was constrained to saue
himselfe in the forrest of Rez, which is harde
ioyning vpon the Castle, where hee light
vpon a stranger, that tooke him in, whereas
this Counseler not onely against all right of

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kinred, but also contrary to all humanitie sealed vpon his Castle, cast out the children of the said Place, and spoyled such goods as he had left there: and beside all this barbarous vnkindnesse, sent Tanchou and his archers to pursue him. Who by this meanes was constrayned to remaine in the forest as a vagabound a good sorte of dayes together, untill at lengthe the Lorde of Bouchauane shewed him this courtesie, to take him very secretly into a little chamber in his Castle of Coussy, where hee was constrained to remaine fast shut vp, comforting himselfe in these his distresses and miseries with the reading of the holy Scriptures, at what time hee gaue himselfe to some deeper consideration of the excellencie of a Christian man, and to write this lytle treatise.

Afterwarde when it pleased G D D to giue his pooze Churche some breathing time, hee returned home to his house, and though there were some resistance made against him by one that in the time of the warre, had enriched himselfe with spoyle of his goods, yet he reentered into the office of his Presidentshippe, and executed it without any reproch, being honoured of all good men,

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men, and feared of the wicked, vntill this cursed S. Bartholomewes day, the four and twentie of August, the last day of a number of honest mens liues, and of the very cheefe and flowres of Fraunce. And amongst the rest was this man De la Place most cruelly murdered in manner as followeth.

The xxiiii. day about fixe of the clocke in the morning, there came to his house one capitaine Michel by name, an harquebusier of Charles the ninth, whome he was the better content to receiue into his house, because he tooke him to bee one of the Kinges Scottish garde, for many of them loued him verie well, and offered their seruice to him oftentimes. When this Captaine Michel was thus entred into his house, armed with an harquebouze on his shoulder, and a pistoll at his girdel, and a table napkin about his left arme in token he was one of the murderers, the first wordes he spake were these, that the Duke of Guise had by the kings commaundement slaine the Admiral, and many other noble men of the religion: and because all the rest of the Huguenots, of what qualitie soeuer they were, were appointed to be murdered, he was come to this Gentlemans house La Place, to deliuer him out of this calamity.

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tie. But yet he would they should shewe him all the gold and siluer in the house.

Then this Gentleman De la Place, amazed at the proudnesse of this man, that being but one in the house, and amongst ten or twelve persons, he durst vse such wordes, asked him if he knew where he was, and whether there were a king or no. To whom this Captaine answered with othes, that seeing it was so, he should goe with him to the king, and so hee should knowe his pleasure. When this Gentleman La Place heard this, and misdoubting that there was some great sedition in the towne, slipped out at a backe doze, thinking to saue himselfe in some of his neighbours houses. In the meane season most part of his seruants conueyed themselues away, and this Captaine hauing gotten about a thousand crownes, as he was departing was requested by Mistres Marets daughter to the same Gentleman to conduct her and Maister Marets her husbande, to some Catholiques house, their friend, which he did.

After this the said la Place, hauing been refused at thre houses, was constrained to come home to his owne where hee found his wife very desolate, & tormenting her selfe very pittifully, both for feare lest this Captaine would

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would haue cast her sonne in lawe and her daughter into the water, and also for the present daunger she sawe her pooze husbände and all her familie in. But this Gentleman la Place, strengthened with the spirite of God, and with marueilous constancie rebuked his wife sharply, laying foorth befoze her, how patiently they had to receiue such afflictions at Gods handes: and so when he had a litle discoursed vpon the promises that God maketh to his children, he put her in good comforte.

Afterwarde he commaunded his men seruantes and mayde seruantes that were left, to be called in, and as he vsed euery Sabbath day to make some kinde of exhortation to his familie, he gaue himselfe to prayer, and afterwarde began to reade a Chapter of Iob, and Master Caluins sermon vpon it, and made a shorthe discourse vpon the iustice and mercie of God, who (saide he) as a good Father exerciseth his chosen people with diuers chastisementes, to the ende they should not staye themselues vpon worldly thinges. He shewed them moreouer how necessarie afflictions are for the Christians, and that neither the worlde, nor the deuill are able to hurt vs further, then it standeth with Gods good will.

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and pleasure to suffer them, and therefore we neede not feare their power which reacheth no further then to our bodies. And after this, he gaue himselfe to prayer againe, preparing himselfe and all his familie to suffer all kinde of torments yea and death it selfe, rather then to doe any thing against Gods glorie.

When he had ended his prayer, one cometh and telleth him that Maister Senescay Prouist of the towne house, and a number of Archers were at his gates, and commaunded them to open the gates in the kings name, and said that he was come to garde La Places person, and to keepe his house from spoiling by the multitude: vpon this occasion, this Gentleman la Place commaunded the gate to be opened, and so he came in and tolde him what slaughter there was made of the Huguenots throughout all the towne, and that by the kinges commaundement, adding these words amongst the rest in Latine, that there should not one be left, that coulde pisse against a wall. Notwithstanding he had expresse commaundement from his Maiestie to see that there were no hurt done to him, but to bring him to the Loure, because he was desirous to be instructed by him of diuers matters touching them of the Religion, which he

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he had to deale in, and therefore that he should make himselfe ready to come to the king.

This Gentleman la Place answered, that he would thinke himself happy for ever, if before he departed out of this world, he might finde the meanes to giue the king an accompt of all his doings and behauiour. But for that time considering what horrible slaughters were committed all the towne ouer, it would be impossible for him to get to the Louure in safetie, without great and most euident danger of his person, but he might well assurance his Maiestie of his person, if it would please him to leaue such a number of Archers in his house, as he should thinke meete, vntill the furie of the people were a litle appeased Senescay graunted him his request, and left him one of his Lieutenants, called Toute voye, and foure of his Archers.

Shortly after that Senescay was departed, the President Charon then Prouist of the Marchants of Paris came to the house, and after he had talked a while with him in secrete, departed and left him foure of the towne Archers beside the Archers of Senescays companie. All the day after and the night following, was bestowed in stopping vp and ramparing the wales into the house, and prouiding

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bing pebbles and stones by into windowes, so that by this great and painefull watche there was some likelihood, that these Archers were placed in the house for the safetie of La Places person, and to preserve his familie from that common miserie that other felt, untill Senescay came backe the next day following, about two of the clocke in the after noone and shewed him, that he had expresse & precise commaundement from the king, to bring him without any further delay. This Gentleman La Place shewed him as befoze, what danger there was for him in the towne, seeing that the selfe same morning, there was one of his neighbours houses sacked. All this notwithstanding Senescay was earnest to the contrarie, saying that it was a common vse amongst the Huguenots to protest great humblenesse, and say that they are the kings most obedient seruants and subiectes, but when it came to the point to obey the kings commaundement, they shewed themselves very colde, and it seemed by them that they coulde in no wise brooke it. And as for the danger, hee sayde it was for him to goe to the Loure, Senescay answered him, that he would giue him a Captaine of Paris, which should be verie well knowne to all the people, to accom-

pany

The life of the authour.

panie him. While Senescay was thus talking with him, a Captaine of Paris called Pessou, and one of the chiefeest cutthrotes came into this Gentlemans La Place his chamber, and offered to conduct him. La Place refused him very earnestly, saying to Senescay, that he was one of the cruellest and wickedest men in all the towne, and therefore desired him onely, seeing he could refuse no longer to goe to the king, that it would please him to goe with him, wherto Senescay answered that by reason of other businesse he had to doe, hee coulde not goe with him aboue fiftie paise.

Whereupon this Gentleman La places wife, though she be a Gentlewoman on whom God hath bestowed many graces & blessings yet notwithstanding the great loue she bare to her husband, caused her to fall downe prostrate befoze the saide Senescay and beseeche him to accompanie her husbände. But with that this Gentleman La Place, who neuer shewed any token of an heart cast downe, began to take vp his wife, & repproue her, shewing her that it is not the arme of man which we must haue recourse vnto, but to **G D D** alone. Afterward turning himselfe aside, hee espied a crosse of paper in his eldest sonnes cappe, which he had of weakenesse set there, thinking

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thinking to saue himselfe by that meanes, whereupon hee rebuked him sharply, commaunding him to take that marke of sedition out of his cappe, and laying forth befoze him, that the true crosse which we must beare, are tribulations and afflictions which God sendeth vs, as most certaine pledges and earnest pennies of that ioy and euerlasting life which he hath prepared for his children. Then seeing himselfe earnestly pressed by the saide Senescay, to goe to the king, resolving himselfe to die the death which hee sawe prepared for him, tooke his cloake, embraced his wife, and desired her aboue all things to haue the honour and feare of God befoze her eyes, and so departed with a most cheerefull countenance.

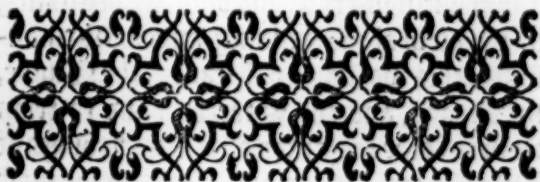
Nowe when he was almost come to the streete called la Verrerie, ouer against the Cocke streete, certaine murderers that wayted for him with their daggers ready drawn, aboue thzee houres, slewe him like a sillie lambe in the middelt of ten or twelue of Senescayes Archers which guided him, and his house was sacked the space of fīue or sixe daies togeather. The body of this Gentleman la Place, whose soule was receiued into heauen, was carried into a stable, at the towne house,

The life of the authour,

house, where his face was couered with
dongue, and the next day after in the morning
was cast into the ryuer.

Thus this great and excellent Martyr of
the Lorde whilest he obeyed the kings com-
maundement, in steade of Iustice which hee
sought, founde death by the way, which was
to him a beginning of the true life: and on the
contrary side, both to them, from whom so vn-
iust, against all Gods law and mans law, and
so cruel and barbarous and moze then brutish
commaundements, proceeded, and also to the
executers of such iniquities, cruelties, barba-
rities, and brutishnesse, a most certaine begin-
ning and entrance to an horrible iudgment
that hangeth ouer their heads, and ouer
their posteritie, though it seeme
long before it come.

(.:.),



Of the excellencie of a Christian man, and the way to know him.

The excel-
lencie com-
mon to all
men,



My intent and purpose be-
ing to intreate of the woꝝ
thines of a christian man,
I meane not in any wyse
to stand to discourse vpon
the excellency of mankind
wherein we doe al communicate, and where-
by the state of man surmounteth the condi-
tion of all other creatures : a reason which
moued the Philosophers to recommend vnto
vs so diligently the knowledge of our selues,
according to the old pꝛouerbe giuen by Sa-
cle, and framed by them to this purpose to
cause vs not onely to keepe our selues with-
in the boundes of modestie and humblenesse,
and to teach vs the weakenesse of our na-
ture, but also to leade vs to the considera-
tion of our noblenesse and dignitie, beginning
by the view of the building and workeman-
ship of this world, as of Heauen, the Sunne,
the Moone, and the Starres : and so from
them to other creatures and liuing things of
diuers sortes, setting out Man, as the most
excellent piece of worke of all, and the chie-
fest

of a Christian man.

best wrought thing amongst all the creatures, on whome it pleased God to bestowe most plentifully, and to enriche with that, which Heauen and earth, and all other his creatures had but small portions of, who was therefore called a litle worlde, and a miracle amongst all creatures, considering the workmanship of his bodye, the ioyntes, the proportion, the beautie and vse of it with his members, his head aboue all his other partes, his eyes looking vp to heauen to beholde from whence he came: and againe the quickenesse of his wit, his discourses vpon the heauens and the earth, and the secrets of nature, his memoize, whereby hee comprehendeth so many things and digresteth them, compareth things passed with things to come: Moreouer his reason, which as they imagine is placed as Queene and mistresse in the wit in the highest seate of vnderstanding to gouerne the will of man, and to frame all his deliberations by the compasse of wisdom.

I meane not, I saye, in any wise to in-
create of this kinde of worthinesse: but min-
ding to passe further, I purpose with my
selfe to speake of an other kinde of excellen-
cie, which is proper and peculiar to a Chri-
stian

The excel-
lencie pro-
per to a
Christian.

Of the excellencie

A man, which farre surmounteth without
 all comparison in all kinde of prerogatiue
 and preeminence the former, bee it neuer so
 highly commended and sette out by them
 which professed themselves wise men, and
 were therefore reputed and taken for the
 wisest amongst other. Which men notwith-
 standing or wise Philosophers, being carried
 away with an ouerweening and blinde loue
 of themselves, ouershot themselves so farre,
 as to say, that man is able by reason of such
 powers as he hath in him, and by his owne
 strengthe, to discerne betweene good and e-
 uill, and commaunde his lustes, and that hee
 hath it in him to gouerne himselfe, not onely
 for the framing of this earthly life, but also to
 lead him to Godwarde, and to the attaine-
 ment of euerlasting blisse and ioye. Moreo-
 uer, that as touching Life, hee hath it by the
 gift of God, but as for liuing well, he hath it
 of himselfe, and the goodnesse that is in man,
 man getteth it of himselfe, in so much as no
 wise and discrete man, sayeth Cicero, euer
 gaue God any thanks for it, because, sayth
 he, we are commended for our vertue, and
 we bragge and boaste our selues of it: which
 we coulde not doe, if it were the gift of God,
 and came not of our selues: adding moreo-
 uer,

A foolish
 praise of
 the powers
 & vertues
 that are in
 man.

of a Christian man.

uer, that the opinion of all the world is this, that as for worldly commodities, wee haue to craue them at Gods hands, but as for wisdom, euery man hath to seeke it within himselfe.

Painting and publishing this false opinion, that whatsoeuer we do by the conduct and guide of nature, it cannot bee but well done, and if man coulde followe that rightly, which he hath in him of nature, hee could neuer doe amisse. And many other such foolish and vaine sayings, which notwithstanding (a thing more to be sorrowed at) they that make profession to be our instructors in holy writ, doe marueilously embrace: who by suffering themselves to be carried away more then reason would they should, by this kinde of heathenish wisdom, are fallen into the selfe same errour, and haue ascribed to man I knowe not what kinde of integritie and vprightnesse both in his reason, and will, in so much that euen they amongst them which thought to speake more soberly and modestly then the rest, as Chrysostome and certaine other, haue made such a parting of stakes between God and man, that while they confesse on the one side, that we can doe nothing without Gods helpe, they maintaine on the other

C

side,

Of the excellencie

lie; that vnlesse wee bringe some thing o
our selues, the grace of God cannot helpe vs
for as they saye, all the matter lyeth not in
Gods helpe, but wee must cast in our rec-
konning also: yea, and that it is in vs to be-
ginne, and in God to make an ende, holding
this for an vndoubted trueth, that **GOD**
hath giuen man power to doe well and to doe
euill, both when, and as him listeth, and that
he is at his own choise, to take of them, which
he will.

A blindnes,
euen in the
knowledge
of the excel-
lencie that
is in man.

This I saye, to shewe howe with all the
light of vnderstanding and vprightnesse of
reason, (whereunto they ascribe the soue-
raintie of the whole man, making it as it
were a Monarche and Emperour) man is
blinded and daseled with the knowledge of
the excellencie, which he labourerth in vayne
to finde in himselfe by the knowledge of his
powers, and beholding all thinges that are
within him. And so consequently howe much
they abuse themselues, which thinke there
is no better way to moue and perswade men
to frame their liues according as they
ought, then to put them in remembrance
what goodly and precious thinges they haue
in them, for thereby they will be moued to
make some account of themselues, and bee
more

of a Christian man.

more carefull to keepe themselves in their place and degree, shunning sinne, and following righteousness: seeing that all this can serue to no other purpose, but to puffe him vp with vaine glorie and ouerweening of himselfe, and cause him to wearie himselfe in conceiuing a good opinion of himselfe, which will not further him the worth of a pinne, and then to vndertake such things, as hee shall neuer bee able to compasse, neither by the reache of reason, nor by accomplishing in deede what hee intended. For the knowledge of a mans selfe, according to the rule of trueth, standeth properly in this, that man weye with himselfe the miserable state and condition whereinto we are fallen through the fall of Adam, to the ende that hauing a right feeling of it as wee ought, all vaine glorie and presumption may bee beaten downe in vs, with a deepe consideration of the losse of our vprightnesse, and in feare thereof, of a corruption and fall from all goodnesse, which is come vpon vs by reason of the corruption of our nature, Satan hauing so fast footing in all the parts of our soule, that euery one of vs in himselfe (as S. Augustine sayeth) is become a Deuil, enemie to God, and accursed on all sides,

The true
knowledge
of a mans
selfe.

Of the excellencie

to the ende that being liuely touched by this meanes with the feeling of our vanitie and frowardnesse, we may be moued to come out of our selues, as voyde and destitute of all goodnesse, and seeke our excellencie, worthinesse, and noblenesse somewhere else, yea and be moued to sigh, and in sighing to breathe after it with great desire to recover the same.

Their error, which haue sought mans excellencie in that which is of man.

Whereby it appeareth how grossely they were deceiued and abused, which thought to find the worthinesse of man within man himselfe, and in that that is of man. The cause of their error is this, that the secreete of their destruction and fall, which came by our first fathers fault, and wherein they would needes seeke a faire and sound building, was not reuealed vnto them. Whereby it came to passe, that through pride which they conceiued of themselves for that small remnant of light that remained of the first beginning which was included in our nature, (which they call a little portion of the Godhead) they spake so boldly and presumptuously of that which they knew not, and commended man for that which in deede is not in him, and wherefore he is not in any wise to be commended. And seeing the case standeth so, that though man be fallen into a miserable state

of a Christian man.

State through the fall of Adam, and the image of God in him be marred and miserably deformed, yet he hath some sparkes left, whereby there remaineth in him some darke light and perseuerance of the excellencie of his nature, that is to saye, of that vprightnesse wherewith the first man was beautified and made noble, so that the corruption of sinne was not able to doe so much, as vtterly to deface the image of God in vs, but that there remained alwaies some litle trace of it, thereby it came to passe, that men pricked and awakened with the feeling of the reliques of their first dignitie and excellency (inwrapped notwithstanding in darkenesse, and possessed with a peruerse and presumptuous desire to haue somewhat of their owne, and remaining within them) were easily moued to praise and commende the excellencie of their nature: which foolishhe desire being once presented to the vnderstanding and hpayne of eche man, by the same deceiuer that would needes perswade our fathers to become like to God, there is not one of vs that hath not a roote of pride deeply planted within his heart.

Not that I meane to denie, but that litle vnderstanding that man hath in himseuen of

Of the excellencie

nature for the maintenance of this present life, and that discretion of good and euill engraued in his heart, yea & that piece of knowledge of God which he hath naturally in him, is not out of doubt excellent, in that it cometh from God: but I say, that all these thinges are defiled in man, euen as wyne that hath receiued infection by the vnſauerie tast of the vessell, whereinto it was put, whereby the grace of his saour and goodnesse is gone, and hath gotten beside a bitter and vntwholsome tast. Because the iudgement and discretion which he hath left to discern and make his choyce of thinges, is partely imperfect and full of confuſion, and all the witt he hath, becommeth wayne, as also his will is tempestuously caried and full of phrenzies accordingly as man is wholly caried away with sinne, and to bee shorthe, his vnderstanding, and percepuerance which hee hath of GOD is nothing else, but a verie horrible wellspring of errors, as appeareth not onely by the idolatries and superstitious which he inuenteth, but also herein, that whereas the heauens keepe their natural motion, and the waters their accustomed course, the byrdes make their nestes, and the plants bying forth fruit eche one in his due time, and to be

Al the excellencie of man, as of man, is defiled.

of a Christian man.

to be shott, no creature subiect to man faulteth in his worke, man indewed with knowledge, iudgment, discourse and vnderstanding, is he that onely erreth, and erreth in such sort, that in the whole world, there is no faulte, no disorder and confusion, but on his part. So that, to speak truely, ther remaineth not one droppe of byrightnesse in his whole nature, so farre is he from that excellencie, whereof I meane to speake, by reason of the corruption that is in him, as euery man will freely confesse, that can and doth rightly consider the heauie sight of his decay.

Wherefore seeing that this our nature, which is common to all men liuing, is not capable of that excellencie whereof I speak, we must needes say, that that man of whom I speake, is transformed into an other newe and more excellent nature, whereuppon God hath bestowed a singular and wonderful vertue, which farre passeth and surmounteth all that is in man, as in deed it cannot be found, nor be confessed to proceed from any, but from God, yea from the Lord and sauiour Iesus Christ: by whom his good pleasure was to restore al mankind, towards whom though he soueraine Creator & maker of all things sheweth sufficiently his fatherly fauour diuers &

The common nature of man is not capable of the excellencie of a Christian,

Of the excellencie

sundrie wayes, yet notwithstanding, vntil he shewe himselke to man a restorer in the person of his onely begotten sonne, their conscience reyproueth them within themselves, and maketh them perceiue that by reason of their filthinesse they are wel woorthy to be cast away as wretched men and caitifs, and can not be taken and accompted for his worke established in them. In which worke is onely and truely that excellencie whereof I meane to speak, which is a worke that farre passeth the worke of the first creation of man, as it will appeare moze plainly hereafter, of which man when S. Paul speaketh, hee sayeth that the efficacie of the might and power, that is to say, of the mightie power of God is plentifully shewed in him, because he setteth forth in him, after a wonderfull sort his infinit vertue, according to the vnspeakeable goodnesse, grace, and fauour, which hee beareth to a Christian man.

The wonderfull
worke of
God ap-
peareth in a
Christian.

The wonderfull good-
nes of god
which ap-
peareth in
a Christian

And that it is so, to shewe it moze particularly, our heauenly father not content that he brought a Christian into the world, of nothing, and that he made him not an Ore or an Asse, which he might haue done, or a Dogge, or a Catte, or any other moze vile or abiect creature, but a man, that is to say, a singu-

lar

of a Christian man.

Iar and perfecte piece of woꝝkemanſhip, and
that he made the woꝝlde and beautified the
heauens and the earth with a perfecte abun-
dance, varietie, and beautie of all things, to
lodgẽ him in it, as it were in a great & ſump-
tuous palace, well and richly furniſhed with
all things neceſſarie, not content I ſay, with
all this, & moꝛeouer, that he had foꝛgotten his
vnthankfull and deteſtable infidelitie and fe-
lonie, where he deſerued to be caſt of, & depꝛi-
ued foꝛ euer of all his bleſſings: yet notwith-
ſtanding it pleaſed him, of a certaine moꝛe
then fatherly loue, and ſpeciall fauour which
hee bare him, not onely euen from his birth
day, and from the firſt houre that he brought
him out into this woꝝld, but euen from his
mothers wombe, yea, and befoꝛe he was con-
ceiued, yea, and that moꝛe is, befoꝛe the woꝝld
was made (as he predeſtined him to himſelfe
from euerlaſting) to elect and chuſe him from
amongſt an infinite million of men, to marke
him & ſet him apart, to exempt him from the
common ſtate and condition of all other men,
that is to ſay, from euerlaſting condemnation
and deſtruction which was prepared foꝛ him
as wel as foꝛ euery other man, to reſerue him
foꝛ himſelfe, to adopt, and regenerate him in
y^e hope of life to an incorruptible inheritance
kept

Of the excellencie

kept in store in heauen, to be reuealed to his elect at that day when all things shalbe restored, and to shewe in him the riches of his glorie, as in a vessell of mercie prepared to saluation.

The cause
of the excellencie of a
Christian
consisteth
in the only
goodnes of
God:

All the cause of this excellent prerogative and dignitie, is not as we see to be sought any where else, but in the singular grace and mercy of God, whom it pleased without any further regarde or consideration of any thing without himselfe, foreseeing the faulte and condition of mankind, of his good pleasure to haue mercie vpon some, to set them in honour as vessels of his mercie, and leaue the rest in their iudgment, giuing grace to some which was not due to them, and rendering to the rest that punishment that was due to the, being in his power to giue to one parte that which they deserued not, so setting forth his grace: and not to giue it to all, thereby shewing what al had deserued without further bestowing like mercie on all: for he made all things, as Salomon sayth, for his owne sake: yea, the wicked man to the daye of his destruction, according to the decree of the good pleasure of his will, which onely is the soueraine and high rule of iustice that iudgeth al the worlde: his wayes which are mercie and
truth

of a Christian man.

truth being incomprehensible, as whereby
he so worketh, that they which obtaine mer-
cy at his handes, haue nothing but his mer-
cie to boast of, and they that are left in their
condemnation, haue nothing to gaine say the
iudgment of trueth as men guilty, nor ought
wherewith to plead against him, in so much
as on the one side, to shew forth his wrath,
and make his mightie power knownen, hee
through great patience and meekenesse bea-
reth with the vessels of wrath prepared to
destrucion, and on the other side, setteth out
the riches of his glorie towards them that he
chose by his grace, who he prepared to glory.

For so it is, as S. Augustine sheweth it at
large, where he speaketh of the predestinatiō
of God, that when God had resolved in him
selfe to builde the Monarchie of this world
& al that is conteined in it, & foresaw, that the
first man should fall wittingly and willingly
into death, being pliable to good and euill, ha-
uing not that giuen him to continue & stande
steadily in that state wherein he was placed:
yea and that all mortall creatures should be
within the compasse of his fall, & subiect vnto
it, hauing so appointed it by his incomprehen-
sible counsell and wisdom, which hath a fore-
knowledge of all thinges ioyned with it, as

Of the e-
ternal coun-
sell of God
touching
man.

Of the excellencie

also his mightie power which gouerneth all things by his hande, and yet notwithstanding minded to haue a litle remnant, euen as you would say, an handfull of men taken out of such a great multitude, to serue for the praise of the glozie of his grace, he chose and set apart from y^e multitude, one man amongst many, which should be in his time ordeined to bee conceiued of the seede of Dauid, and should be borne of a virgin, to witte, Iesus Christ, (finding nothing in all the seede, of Adam worthy his election, and such a prerogatiue and excellencie) in whom also as in the head, hee chose to be members as it were of his bodie, such as it pleased him freely of his grace to appoint before hand and receiue to life: and by the selfe same man, to ioyne them vnto himselfe, and allie them so together that they should neuer bee seuered, hauing foreshene a great while before that in Adam, there should come good of euill, and knew most vndoubtedly, that it belonged to his almightie goodnesse to turne good into euill, rather then to suffer that there should be no euill, and so accordingly disposed the life of men and Angels, as that he would thereby shew first what free will was able to doe, and then what the gift of his grace coulde doe, ha-
uing

of a Christian man.

uing that all vnder sinne, that all might haue neede of grace.

And therefore as the excellencie which I ascribe to a Christian, and proceedeth from this grace appeareth fully and abundantly in Iesus Christ, so is it powred out vpon his members according to the measure of euery one, by which grace man was made a Christian when he first began to beleue, as our Sauour was made Christ according to the flesh, when he first beganne to bee man. And therefore was he called Christ, and the other by his meanes, Christians, as streames flowing from the chiefe fountaine: for so had the Almighty purposed in himselfe to gather them vnto him, by the blood of the Crosse of Iesus Christ, at the fulnesse of time appointed, finding them miserably strayed and scatered amongst the other, and set them in their right state: which is, to cleaue continually to him, being knitte and coupled together with him in a true and perfect unitie, by engrafting them into the bodie of his sonne. Who for that cause are called electe or chosen through the good pleasure of God, to make a difference betweene them and the other which were not kepte in the saide unitie, but forsaken by a secret reprobation

The excellencie of a Christian appeareth fully in Iesus Christ.

The excellencie of a Christian proceedeth of that fulnesse which is in Christ. All the elect are gathered together in Christ.

Of the excellencie

bation in the secret counsel of God.

The cause
and matter
of the excel
lencie of a
Christian is
wholy to be
referred to
the loue
and good-
nes of god
by Christ
from euer-
lasting

The vni-
ting and
ioyning to-
gether of a
Christian
with Christ

So that, whether wee meane the cause,
or the matter it selfe of the excellencie of a
Christian man, so farre I am either from
seeking or setting the saide excellencie of a
Christian, in man himselfe, as the Philoso-
phers doe, that I meane not to ascribe it to
any thing in the world, but to that headspring
of all graces, benefites, and blessings, that is
to say, to the euerlasting loue and gracious
goodnesse of God by Iesus Christ, in whom
God chose his elect befoze the foundation of
the worlde, to adopt them according to the
purpose of his will, and made them agreea-
ble in his welbeloued sonne, who was by him
appointed head ouer them, which by him and
through him, and no otherwise, are restored
and settled in his grace, and made his heires
to enioye his kingdome. Whereas befoze
they were a cursed race of Adam, and inheri-
ters of hell fire. For the Father loueth none,
but in his Sonne, and vouchsafeth none his
inheritance, vnlesse he first ioyne them to his
sonne by a secret bond and vnitie, causing the
vertue of the head to descend into the mem-
bers, as the sappe of the roote of the tree
goeth into the grasse that is impied into it,
insomuch as the spirituall bond and knotte
belongeth

of a Christian man.

belongeth not only to the soule, but also to the body, and so, that the Christian man is made one with Iesus Christ, flesh of his flesh, and bones of his bones, yea euen so far forth, that they beare his name & person before God, and be rather respected in their persons, then in his owne. To be short, euen as naturally the only beholding of the face of man moueth vs to loue him and all his partes, though if wee should vewe his members apart, we might happily finde somewhat to mislike vs, & bring vs out of tast, so fareth it likewise with the Christian, who is a member of Iesus Christ, being considered in Christs face and person, which when God beholdeth in his elect, imprinted as it were in them by [the repaying of his image in them, loueth & cherisheth the, as persons with whom he is well pleased.

So that to speake in few words, it is this fellowship which they haue wth Christ (whereunto they are called, both by the communion of one selfesame spirit, and one selfe same nature which is both in them & him) wherein the excellencie of a Christian man consisteth and appeareth very evidently, in that he is set in the highest degree of honour being made the childe of God, by Iesus Christ taking vpon him that that was proper to man to be made
man

The excellencie of a Christian doth wel appear in the fellowship which hee hath with Christ.

Of the excellencie

man as he was, and to make him fellow with himselfe in that that was proper to himselfe, by making him the sonne of God. For thence commeth his holy brotherhood, which he teacheth vs, saying, I goe to my father and your father, to my God, and your God. Being not ashamed (as the Apostle sayth) notwithstanding the great oddes that is betwixt him and vs, to abase himselfe so farre as to call vs Brethren, euen after his resurrection, when he had put of al his infirmitie, vs, I say, which are not otherwise worthy to bee vnder his seruants. Wherein therefore the Christian man appeareth to be aloft, not onely aboue all other liuing creatures by reason of his owne nature, as the philosophers say, but also aboue al other men by this preeminence which those Philosophers knewe not at all, whereby he surmounteth the dignitie of the first man, taking him in the greatest perfection he euer had, because the grace of God is farre more settled and sure in the regeneration of the faithful, then it was in the first state of man, that being greater which we haue recovered in Christ Iesus, then y^e which we lost in Adam. For Adam had grace giuen him to continue in goodnesse, if he had would, but to the Christian it is giuen to haue a wil and in hauing a will

The Christian man
farre pas-
seth all o-
ther men.

That
which the
Christian
reouereth
in Christ,
is greater
then that
which he
lost in A-
dam.

of a Christian man.

will he ouercommeth his lustes. So that Adam might if he would, but he had no will, that he might: and the Christian hath both will and might giuen him. So that the first libertie was giuen to Adam, that he might abstaine from sinne and not die: but that that is giuen to the Christian, (the pledges wherof we haue here, and looke for the perfection in heauen) standeth in this, that he can neither sinne nor die, because the elect are vnseparably knit with Iesus Christ their head, which bond maketh them stronge and steadfast, to cleaue to God for euer.

To be short, this excellencie of a Christian man mounteth so high, that it surmounteth the excellencie of the very Angels, in this respect that the euerlasting Sonne of God vnited himselfe to mans nature, and not the nature of Angels, minding to perfite and accomplishe in it the wonderfull worke of our redemption: and afterward hauing glorified it with immortalicie, by his resurrection, he set it in his heauenly kingdome aboue all principalities and heauenly powers in all honour and glorie: so that the Christian man being partaker of the flesh of Christ which is carried by and reigneth on high, hath part also of the same kingdome and glorie. And

D

though

Of the excellencie

though the Angels, as touching their naturall essence, are counted more excellent then man, yet notwithstanding, because they haue no head of their kinde and nature, the Sonne of God, euen according to the flesh, surmounteth them in dignitie and noblenesse.

The chiefe excellencie of a Christian is to be made like vnto God.

To this purpose, S. Peter speaking of Christians, thought it not enough to say, that they are a chosen generation, an holy race, a peculier people to set forth the great vertues of God, and a Royal Priesthood, consecrated to Iesus Christ, to offer sacrifices, not for the remission of sinnes (for that office is thoroughly accomplished by Christ Iesus his onely sacrifice, the force whereof remaineth for euer) but sacrifices of prayse, and thanksgiving, and calling vpon the name of God, which are the calues of our lippes, and sacrifices of beneuolence, & imparting our goods with the poore: he thought it not enough, I say, to giue them all these so great and honorable titles, but goeth on further and sayeth they are made partakers of the diuine nature, which is so excellent a conditiō, that the head of man is not able to imagine or wishe an higher. For indeede, what can a man desire more, then to become like to God: surely the spirite of man is not sufficient & able to comprehend

of a Christian man.

prehend the greatnesse of this grace, & how it might be that God should vouchsafe to honoꝝ man so highly, as to make him a God as it were, if we may so say by making him partaker of his diuine immortality & blessed glory.

And therefore S. Paul writing to the Coloss. and speaking to them as to Christians saith that they were complet in Christ, whē he had said a litle before y^e al the fulnesse of the godhead dwelleth bodily in him, shewing thereby, that this perfect essence of y^e Godhead which is in Iesus Christ, did auaille thē in that, that they receiued thereby their perfection also. And in that that God is wholly in him, is to the end that when they once possesse him they might obtaine such a perfection in him, as none of vs is able to attaine vnto by al y^e wit & vnderstanding we haue. Yea so farre forth, that this knot and bond is such an one that Iesus Christ who worketh al in all, vouchsafeth the Christian thus much honour, that he counteth himselfe after a sort imperfect, if he be not ioyned with him, as S. Paul witnesseth, saying that the Church is the filling of the body of Christ. And therefore there is no maruaile, if the Prophet Dauid rauished with great admiration of this so wonderfull goodness & loue of God towards mankinde, and

The Christian man is made perfect in Christ.

The wonderfull vnting of a Christian with Christ

Of the excellencie

being as it were rauished and besides himselfe cried and saide, Lorde, what is man that thou so regardest him? that is to say, that of thy gracious goodnes thou hast made him so excellent a creature? For if he should consider & seeke his first beginning from whence he came, where shal he finde it but in the dirt and dust of the earth: if he make the place of his abode, he shall finde himselfe scrawling here vpon the earth belowe: if he looke to his ende, he shall see that his body shalbe meate for wormes. And yet notwithstanding, saith hee, thou hast so highly honoured this poore creature Man, that the Angels serue him, as if he were a God. For thou hast made him a little inferiour to God, and hast crowned him with glorie and honour, and placed him ruler ouer the workes of thine hands, and hast put all things in subiection vnder his feete: As if he would say, what occasion did dust giue thee, that of it thou shouldest make a creature to thine image and likenesse, whom thou wouldest make Lorde and maister of all the world: and put in subiection vnder his feete what so euer is vnder the compasse of heauen: speaking of the man that is restored in Iesus Christ.

For in deede it is he onely, and none but
he

of a Christian man.

he amongst all liuing things that is the only Lord of the worlde, by recouering that interest in Christ, which was befoze lost in Adam who was at the beginning made heire and Lorde of all Gods blessings, but was afterwards dispossessed of them thzough his rebellion, and disobedience, so that all his posteritie hath no other interest noz title, in the blessings of this worlde, then theeues & robbers haue, which take awaye other mens goods, the Christian onely except, to whom of right belongeth the vse of all things, as S. Paul sayth, whether it be the worlde, oz life, oz death, oz things present, oz things to come, all things, in a worde, are his, because they were made for his profit. And there is nothing, but God maketh it serue, and turneth it to his profit, insomuch that by a speciall dispensation of his pzouidence, he causeth that the very sinnes themselves which man committeth, turne rather to his saluation the to his hurt, in that that by them he humbleth them, and maketh them better taught, and more aduised. To be shorzt, this man is a creature that from euerlasting was in Gods heart thzough Iesus Christ, and therefore a thing so riche and pzecious, that it may wel be called Gods treasure.

Onely the
Christian.
is Lorde of
the world.

All things
are profitable to the
Christian,
yea, euen
sinne it self.
The Christian man
is from euerlasting
in the heart
of God.
The Christian is
Gods treasure.

Of the excellencie

He descen-
deth to a
more parti-
cular de-
claration
of the excel-
lencie of a
Christian

The Chri-
tian is a
creature
whom the
world kno-
weth not.

But seeing I haue begun to dilate this excellencie of a Christian man by the euertlasting counsell of **G D D**, which he determined and appointed within himselfe befoze the worlde was, according to his gracious goodnesse fully set forth in Iesus Christ to all them whom he hath coupled together with him: It shall be good nowe to come lower, and to treat of the matter, as it were by descent from heauen to earth, and to shewe this excellencie moze particularly in a Christian, beginning at his regeneration, and so going on from point to point, to shewe howe miraculously he is formed, nourished and brought vp to ripe age: what manners he is of, what his life is, and what his conuersation, to set him out after this sorte in his colours and markes as he is. For indeede hee is a newe creature, whom the worlde knoweth not, and an hidden treasure in a vile and contemptible vessell, hard to knowe if hee be not well marked out and set forth with liuely colours. And lest in discoursing of it, we fall headlong into the same errour, which the wise fooles of the world fall into in their discourses vpon his excellencie, it shall not be amisse, if at the entrie of the matter, I warne euery man to beware he p̄sume not so much of him selfe,

of a Christian man.

as to imagine that hee hath ought of his owne, as though he had in himselfe any picce of a cause, meane, or aide to set forward this worke.

Man may bring nothing of his owne to make him a Christian.

Therefore, as I said before, that we haue not to seeke the cause or ground worke, or matter of this excellencie any where else, but in the meere grace of God according to his euerlasting prouidence, so say I againe, to shut out all worthinesse of man, that all the goodnesse and vertue that may possibly bee found in man, proceedeth from the fruite of Gods election: & therefore to be a Christian, that is to say, the best of all creatures, proceedeth wholly from the gift of our heauenly father, in that that whatsoeuer hee hath giuen to Christ, commeth to Christ, and in that that noone whit of the worlde belongeth to the Creator, were it not that the grace of God plucketh a fewe out of destruction, which otherwise would haue perished, the worlde being left in that destruction, whereunto it is most iustly appointed. And for this cause Iesus Christ protesteth, that he prayeth the Father for them onely whom the Father hath giuen him. For in deede, the grace of God findeth no cause in any man, why hee should bee good vnto him, but man receiueth

The excellencie of a Christian proceedeth from Gods election, & from nothing that is in man.

Of the excellencie

all of his mercie, because it is Gods worke onely to saue his, and for that ende and purpose to make them fit and meete to be partakers of his inheritance. And for a man to imagine any pretence for man in this case, it were as much as if he should goe about to make him his owne maker. And if we doe well to giue God all the praise for the direction of this our corruptible life, howe may we be so bolde to ascribe that vnto our selues, which is without cōparison a thousand times better: to wit, the life that perisheth not, but remaineth for euer, seeing it is a great deale easier to make vs men, then by our owne industrie and vertue to bee regenerate into a farre more excellent nature.

Whereupon Saint Paul, to take away all presumptuous opinion of mans bzaine in this behalfe sayeth, That it is neither in the willer, nor in the runner, that is to say, neither in merite, nor worthinesse, nor industrie, nor will, nor helpe, or any meanes that man can worke, but in the onely goodnesse of our Lord and master, who doth all things according to the counsell of his good will, not according to our works, but according to the purpose of his grace, which was giuen vs by Iesus Christ before the worlde was. And
this

of a Christian man.

this ought of a trueth content vs and suffice vs for all reason that may bee brought: for to goe about to searthe out any other, what were it else, but to open a gappe for rashe and heady fellowes to demaund in like sorte a reason of all his workes, why he bestoweth his graces moze vpon some, then vpon other, as to beginne with the brute beastes, why God made them not reasonable creatures: and why he made not a woman, a man: and why he made not the ignorant, weake, and pooze man, a wise, strong, and rich man: and as touching the elect themselves, why they are not the same that their head is, why there is so great odds betweene them, why they are so vncleane, and he very cleannesse it self, and so in summe, why he bestoweth not his giftes, as well vpon this man, as vpon that man.

And yet my meaning is not, that God hath no reason for making such a difference betweene his creatures as he hath done: but because that reason is hidden within his secret counsel, I say it must suffice vs for good and all, that his will was so, and say with S. Augustine, that faithfull ignorance is better then rashe knowledge: yea that such ignorance is learned, & the desire to know moze,
is a

Of the excellencie

is a kinde of madnesse. Therefore when wee see that some haue this honour done the, that they are made Christians as well as other, though we see no euident cause why it should be so, we must learne to stand in admiration of the deepenesse and profoundnesse of Gods iudgment, which we may in no wise dispute of: and therefore euery one of vs hath to content himselfe to knowe, that to be a Christian, is the workmanship, as S. Paul saith, and creature of God, created in Iesus Christ, and that God hath blessed him with all spirituall blessings in heavenly things in him, as he chose him in him before the foundation of the worlde, being predestined of God to adapt him to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will to the praise of his grace, which hee hath powred out most plentifully vpon him, in all wisdome and understanding, and to whom he hath giuen to know the secreete of his will, according to his everlasting decree which he purposed in him selfe, being moued thereunto by no other meanes, then of himselfe.

So then to come to the regeneration of a Christian, and to speake of the order that is holden therein, first of al we may not dreame of any such generation as Pythagoras made, who

To be a
Christian,
is the only
worke of
God.

Of the re-
generation
of a Chri-
stian.

of a Christian man.

who thought that as soon as the bodies were dead, the soules went into other bodies: neither may we dreame of any naturall generation or power of man, whereby this man should be made after this sorte: for this generation is not wrought by a corruptible and vncleane seed, as the first was whereof we are all partakers, which can engender nothing but corruption, nothing can be borne of flesh, but flesh, whose ende is death and destruction: but by an other and second generation which is spirituall, made of an holy and vncorruptible seed, which is the worde of God preached, whereby they that are appointed to saluation, are called and begotten to him. For in deed there is no other difference betweene Predestination, and calling, but this, that predestination is a preparatiue of that, whereof the calling is the effect and the accomplishment: and yet my meaning is not, that this generation is made by the vertue of one simple worde vttered by the voyce of man which soundeth onely in the eares, which God vseth as his meanes and instrument to call all men indifferently to him: (for many are called, saith Christ, but fewe are chosen, and it were to set a mortall man too much on cockehorse to say that his voyce were

Of the excellencie

were so pearcing of it self as to worke a regeneration in the soule of man) but I say, it is by an other inward calling of God, by y^e meanes of the outwarde which is wrought by man, which inward calling maketh it selfe heard within, by drawing the heart vnto it, which receiueth the witnes of the euerlasting grace, and without which, the voice of man could be but a bare sound that vanissheth awaye in the ayre, and a literal preaching & dead without any fruite, the seede time being of litle value, vnlesse the increase be giuē by vertue of that life which is reserued onely for them which were appointed vnto it from the beginning of the world, according to y^e purpose of God, and no purpose of theirs, to whom onely it is giuen to knowe the secrets of the kingdome of heauen, all other men being shut out and left to their owne nature, whereby they are deafe and blinde, conceived and borne such of the vncleane seede of their parentes, hauing beside a darkened vnderstanding which can not comprehend the misteries of God: for his worde is couered and hidden to them, so that they can no more perceiue the glorious and bright shining light of it, then blind men can the light of the sunne: for no man can come to Christ, vnlesse hee haue a speciall grace giuen

of a Christian man.

giuen him from aboue.

Now as touching the way that our heavenly Father taketh in framing a Christian man, this it is, he first determined in himselfe to make the world and all things to his glorie, and men especially, to shewe to one sorte of them which are predestinate to saluation, his mercie, and to the other sorte, his iustice. And to this effect he appointed for an onely and sole Mediatour Iesus Christ his onely begotten Sonne, of one selfe same substance with himselfe: euen God euerlasting, to the end that by him being made man, and the two natures vnited and ioyned together in one in him, all corruption of mankind might bee purged and al righteousnesse fully accomplished in him for all, as one able enough to sustayne the iudgment of God, and worthy enough to appease his wrath by the offering vp of himselfe, the iust dying for the vniust, and to sanctifie all his elect, abolishing their sinne in them by the communication of his death, and quickning them by his resurrection. To be shorte, he determined with himselfe to giue them his sonne, and in him what soeuer is requisite for their saluation, as also to giue them to him, and so to make them Christians, by ingrafting them into Christ: which

Howe
man becometh a
Christian.

Of the excellencie

which euermlasting purpose and decree, he resolved also to reueale vnto them, when they should not thinke of it, causing himselfe to be found as the Prophet sayeth, of them, which inquired not after him, and at that time, that they walke after the course and fashion of this world, euen as Satan would haue them, and proceedeth in it after this sort.

First, to awake them out of the dead sleepe of sinne whereinto they are fallen, he pricketh them with the sharpenesse of his lawe, and laying a number of examples of his Justice before them, driueth them into a feare, not minding to beate them downe into desperation, but to make them turne their faces towards the Mediatour, in whom they may finde some place of refuge. And to this end, he layeth before them in conclusion his grace and fatherly goodnes by the preaching of his Gospel, he teacheth them, he maketh them apt to receiue instruction, assureth them of their election, summoneth them to his heauenly inheritance, stretcheth out his hande vnto them to bring them thither, pea, and draweth them vnto him, fashioneth them new eares, lighteneth their eyes, changeth their stonie heart, into a fleshy heart, openeth their vnderstanding, reneweth their senses, disposeth

of a Christian man.

seth and maketh them fit to sauiour and taste
his worde, which he soweth, and causeth it to
budde and bring forth fruit in them, & maketh
them fit for his election. To be shorthe, when
he hath once formed Christ in them, hee dec-
keth and enricheth them with many giftes
and graces, and whereas they were farre of
from him, hee maketh them drawe neere to
him, of strangers hee maketh them house-
birdes, of wolues sheepe flocking together
vnder the great pastour of soules: of natu-
rall, fleshly, earthly, and deuillish men, he ma-
keth them heauenly, spirituall, angellike and
diuine: and by this meanes translateth them
from the kingdome of darkenesse, into the
kingdome of light, transporteth them from
death to life, and bringeth them into his own
housholde. To be shorthe, hauing thus ingraf-
fed them into the body of his Sonne, he ioy-
neth and allieth himselfe to them, he maketh
himselfe one with them, maketh them his
chilozen and heyres partakers of his immor-
talitie and glorie and all this he worketh by
the inward vertue of his holy Ghost, & with
an other maner of efficacie then by restoring
the reliques of free will, as some popish mates
ple to speake, seeing that all the remainder
that man hath of this free will, serueth to no-
thing

Of the excellencie

thing else but to sinne willingly, to flie from God, to hate him, and to haue no will to heare him, nor beleue in him, nor acknowledge any of his blessings: and that moze is, to thinke vpon nothing but vpon sinne, and not to haue so much as one good thought.

Which wonderfull order S. Bernard considering, cryeth out and sayth, Beholde an high and marueilous counsell, which hath bene published to vs. God knoweth them that are his, and what he knewe, he hath shewed to men: he receiueth none to the knowledge of this misterie and hidden thing, but such as he hath predestined. And addeth mozeouer, The mercie of God from euermlasting to euermlasting, on them that feare him: from euermlasting, because of his predestination: to euermlasting, because of the blessednesse which they looke for, the one hath no beginning, and the other hath no ende. S. Augustine also saith in like sorte, Is not this a kinde of schole, far from the sense of the fleshe, wherein the Father is the scholemaster that teacheth vs to come to him, and the Sonne of God is the worde whereby hee teacheth, and which entereth by the eare euen to the heart, where is also the spirit of the Father and the Sonne, who teacheth also secretly with them, and not apart,

of a Christian man,

apart, for the workes of the Trinitie are inseparable, so that, if we see numbers come to the Sonne, it is by him that maketh many to beleue in Christ. But where & when euerie man hath heard & bene taught by the father, we see it not, because this grace is hidden, secret & heauenly, wrought by y^e renewing of y^e holy Ghost, powred out plentifully vpon the.

And truely, it is a marueilous generation, which maketh man a new creature, not that he receiueth an other soule, or an other bodie in substance, but in qualitie, by repayring the Image of God in him, by an inward renewing of the whole nature, that was corrupted: yea it is a worke which setteth out vnto vs no lesse vertue and power of God, then that whereby Iesus Christ was rayled from the dead and placed at the right hand of God his Father. To be short, it is done by the worde, as by the ordinarie instrument which maketh vs partakers of Christ, and frameth the Christian man, so that vnlesse the doore of our hearing be opened by the preaching of the Gospell, the worde cannot enter into the heart, and the preaching is wrought by the voyce of man assisted by the inward vertue of the holy Ghost, which man must be sent by a speciall grace of God, to declare vnto vs, that

The excellencie of the power of God in the generation of a Christian.

¶

this

Of the excellencie

this special grace is according to his electioⁿ, which is according to his eu^erlasting counsell, determined according to the good pleasure of his will, which onely is iust and reasonable. And so consequently both the calling, and other effectes that follow, flowe from the eu^erlasting Election, as brookes & streames doe from the fountaines and springes,

The beginning of a Christian is from heauen, as is also his conuersion.

The Father & Mother of a Christian.

The nourishment of a Christian

Therefore, seeing this man is not begotten either of flesh, or blood, as other are, but of God, it is not for nought that I said before, that he is such a creature, as the world knoweth not. For indeede his beginning is not from hence beneath from the earth, but from aboue from heauen, as also his chiefest conu^ersation and abyding place is there where he hath God for his father : and here the Church for his mother, but yet in deede heauenly : Mother, because she hath her beginning from that grace, that is aboue, & mozeouer because she is gardien and keeper of the seede of that life that perisheth not, by which seede she conceiueth and byingeth forth this man, and when shee hath brought him forth, she nourcerh him with the seasoned milke of vnderstanding, that being nourished by it, he may grow vp to saluation. And afterwarde she fostereth him with strong and substantiall

of a Christian man.

shall meate, vntill he come to a perfect age; that is, to the attainment of the latter ende of faith. Euen as the natural man, conceived of naturall seede is nourished with blood in his mothers wombe, and fedde afterwarde with milke when he is once bozne as al creatures are nourished with that whereof they are ingendred, euen so the regenerate man, conceived and begotten of the incorruptible seede of the worde of God, is nourished and fostered by it, receiuing the same simply and purely without any mixture and hotch pock of any other mans inuention with it.

For as there is no foode more wholesome then the food of the word of God, if it be receiued syncerely as it is, so there is none more noysome and hurtful, when it is marred with mixture of other things mingled with it, then is the false doctrine of men: And therefore God speaking to his Church by the mouth of his Prophet Esai, sayeth after this sorte, My spirit which is in thee, and my wordes which I haue put into thee, shall neuer depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy children. And to the ende they may growe vp and profite the better, he sealeth and marketh them with the seale and marke of Baptisme, adding mozeouer an inwarde working of

The nourishment of the pure worde of God is wholesome

To make the Christian growe vp & profite

Of the excellencie

his holy Ghost, and afterward giueth them
for meate and nourishment the Sacrament
of the bodie and blood of Iesus Christ,
though hee bee able and sufficient enough to
bring them to perfection in one houre. But
it pleaseth him to haue them growe vp af-
ter that sorte by litle and litle, vnder the
nourishment of this mother, so that who so
is not conceiued in her wombe, and brought
forth by her, and fostered and nourished
by her, doeth boast in vaine, that **G D D**
is his Father: For he begetteth no children,
neither fostereth and bringeth vp any, but by
his ministerie, so that we may not separate
these two things which **G D D** hath cou-
pled together, to wit, that the Church is Mo-
ther to all them whose father he is, and who-
soeuer is not begotten of her, is begotten of
an harlot, and hath an harlot for his mother,
who begetteth children for the Deuill, and
to euermlasting death: seeing there is no en-
trance into the life that remaineth for euer,
but only for them whom this mother keepeth,
and guideth, and gouerneth: so that who so
is out of her bosome, it is impossible for him
to be saued.

And as in y fleshy generation there is one
lawfull and an other bastard, so fareth it also

Bastarde
children.

Of a Christian man.

In the spiritual generation, there is one lawfull and an other bastarde. The first is after the spirite, and the second after the flesh, and are hereby knowen the one from the other, that the one is conceived and made by the spirite of trueth, of a chaste mother, that is chaste and faithfull to her husband Iesus Christ: and the other, by the spirit of errour and lyes, of a mother that playeth the harlot with Satan, by breaking her promise made to Christ, and yet notwithstanding kissing him with a trecherous kisse of Judas: and like an hypocrite and dissembling harlot as shee is, contenteth her selfe to haue but one halfe of him: the one being touched with a pure and naturall loue, will not haue him, vnlesse she may enioy him wholly, and therefore begetteth lawfull children, which are children of light, begotten of the immortall seede, and beautified with righteousness and holinesse, to the ende sayeth Saint Iames, that they may be the first fruites of his creatures, that is to say, chosen and set apart from all other men, and sequestred to be an holy offering: the other, on the contrarie side, begetteth children of darkenesse to Satan, of a mortall seede, which are workers of iniquitie, whose vnderstanding is corrupt, going

Two kinds
of spirituall
generation

Of the excellencie

on from naught to worse, as they are led by the spirit of lies, by whom the pure brightnesse of true doctrine is stopped by, and the seruice of God disfigured with many kindes of superstitions, idolatrie and wickednes, and yet vnder a colour of godlinesse, wisdom, and holines, wherby they draw other into errour.

Amongst all
the bastard
children,
the child of
perdition
is the chiefest.

Amongest all the children thus begotten, the man of sinne the childe of Satan is most notozious, in whome the spirite of Satan dwelleth in all fulnesse, as he doth also in the which haue receiued his marke in their foreheads and handes, and this man listeth by himselfe aboue all that is called God, and aboue that thing whatsoeuer it be, wherin the worship of the Lord standeth, which he transferreth to himselfe, in so much as hee sitteth in the temple of God, and maketh warre against Christ, with power of illusion and deceiueablenesse, the like whereof was neuer seene, bearing a booke in his hande, which is sweet in the hand, but bitter in the heart, and so much the more deadly to the consciences of men, by howe much it is pleasaunt to mans sense and reason, and giueth him occasion to boast of himselfe. To be short, this generation is a crooked, unfaithfull, wicked and froward generation, and yet notwithstanding,

of a Christian man.

ding, the number of them is great, they are farre mightier and of greater renoume then the other, which are but a small flocke, vyle abiect, and contemptible; as touching the fleshe.

Now then, if the meanes of this generation of a Christian man, whereby he is renewed into a newe life, and made a newe creature, be found to be such that it surmounteth the capacitie of our senses, we may not marueile at it, seeing that euen in this bodily life, wee perceiue such a vertue, as the reason whereof our senses are not able to attaine vnto. As for example, there is none of vs, but draweth the vitall spirite of the ayre, and wee all feele the motion of the ayre, wherby we both draw in our breath, and breath out, and yet there is not one of vs that can tel, fro whence this mouing commeth, or whether it goeth. And though euery one of vs feele in himselfe the vertue of the ayre, yet we know not the beginning and the cause of it. ¶ Tel then, if in this transitorie life which is gone in a moment, we see a marueilous vertue weherby God worketh so mightily in it, that it passeth the reache of our senses, howe is it possible to fetch within the compasse of our vnderstanding this secrete worke in the heauenly

The generation of a Christian surmounteth the reach of our senses.

Of the excellencie

life which passeth the reache of nature, as though we were not to beleue any more, then we are able to perceiue by the vew of the eye:

The light
that is giue
to the Chri
stian can
neuer be
wholly ex-
tinguished.

But the chiefeſt point that is to be conſidered in the excellencie of this generation is this, that euen as the worde of God is an vn- corruptible ſeed of life, which bringeth forth fruite like to it ſelfe, and ſuch a budde as neuer drieth vp: euen ſo when the Chriſtian man is once made partaker of this light, it can neuer be ſo put forth & choked vp in him, but there remaineth ſtill ſome ſparke alway in him, ſuch is the force of the word, when it is once kindled in the heart of man by the ho- ly Ghost, who beareth him witneſſe that he is the childe of God, and cauſeth him to followe his gouernement and conduct with a ſteady heart, and holdeth him in a ſteady and conti- nuall obedience of iuſtice. And therefore God ſayeth by his Prophet Ezechiel, That hee giueth them that are his, a newe heart, and promiſeth them that they ſhall walke in his ordinances, for his holy ſpirite purſueth his grace in them, euen to the ende. For though there be ſometime ſome breaches and crackes in their faith, as we haue alterations in vs by reaſon of our fraileneſſe, moued there- unto by ſuch violence as Satan worketh a-
gainſt

of a Christian man.

gainst vs, and though the brightnesse of our faith be daseled with the thicke and obscure darkenesse of tentation: yet notwithstanding it ceaseth not to haue alwayes an eye to God: and that moze is, though it so fall out (as we know it befell to Dauid) that the Christian man bee for a season so dead on sleepe with such a blockishnesse of sinne that there appeareth not any one sparke of the spirite in him (as Dauid prayeth for this cause that it may be restored to him) yet notwithstanding this seede, whereby God regenerateth his elect, as it is incorruptible dieth not, though it bee for a season as it were choked, so that a man would thinke, that all reuerence and feare of God were cleane put out. Yet there is a cole vnder these ashes, which kindleth and taketh fire againe, and this roote commeth to spurt forth, when a man would haue thought it had beene cleane dead. For the vertue and goodnesse of God is such, that it surmounteth our malice, so that, that man may be sure of his saluation whom God hath once touched with a liuely faith, though it were but a very short while: for he is constrained to say, that that which he beleued, is a trueth, seeing it cannot be by flesh and blood, but by the light of God, wherein there is neither lie, nor deceit:

Of the excellencie

reit : and so consequently, that that hath bene
once found true, shalbe euer true.

The worke
of the rege-
neration of
a Christian
is neuer
left vnper-
fect.

For this is certaine that God, who began
this worke of regeneration, will persfite it in
the day of the Lorde, and will not leaue the
worke of his hands vnperfect, for his giftes
and callings are without repentance, & looke
what he hath once giuen, he neuer calleth it
backe, being faithfull & constant in his deeds,
and keepeth his trueth euerlastingly, with-
out any alteration or change, for it is impos-
sible his worde should fayle : and it cannot
be but Gods decree must remaine according
to the election, so that whomsoever he hath
once knownen & appointed to saluation, that
man can neuer fall from his saluation. The
steadfastnesse of his counsell is shewed to the
heyyes of promise that it shall endure for e-
uer, by two things which can neuer be chan-
ged, to wit, his worde, and his othe, where-
by hee hath confirmed his promises, and it
is impossible he should lie in them. To this
purpose, Iesus Christ sayeth, that all that
the father hath giuen him, shall come to him,
and he will not cast out one of them that shal
come to him. For this is the will of my Fa-
ther, saith he, that I leese not one of them
whom my Father hath giuen me, but I will
rayse

of a Christian man.

sayle them vp all in the latter day. And againe, My sheepe saith he, heare my voyce, and followe me, I knowe them and giue them euerlasting life, and no man shall take them out of mine hand. So then, seeing hee hath promised that that man which hath once taken liuely roote in him shall neuer be plucked vp, all that are of the flocke of his sheepesfold, are out of danger to be euer cast away, because the purpose of God which hee hath decreed vpon them is steadfast, and the sentence of peace is ratified to them, & therefore he taketh them apart and sayeth vnto the in this wise: Feare not, litle flock, seeing it is giuen to you to knowe the mysterye of the kingdome of heauen: for to whomsoever the gift of beleeuing is giuen, to the same man is also giuen the gift of continuance according to the vertue of the holy Ghost which is euerlasting, wherby the Christian man is renewed, and his force remaineth for euer: for otherwise, were it not continuing for euer, y grace of God could not be alwayes sure and stable.

And on the other side, it were to great and dolefull blockishnesse and distrust, to doubt whether the Sonne of God in his prayers for the Elect, that their faith might not sayle them, were heard or no, seeing he sanctified
him

Of the excellencie

himselfe for them, so that their hope which is as it were a sure anchre for the soule, extendeth it selfe beyonde our death : and though the infirmitie of the fleshe bee great, yet seeing their fast holde hangeth not vpon their owne vertue, but vpon the vertue & strength of God, seeing their saluation is kept vnder his secret garde, as vnder a seale, and authenticall signet, they are out of al daunger, written as it were, and inregistred by the almightie and euerlasting God in the booke of life, so that all their sinnes are not able to stoppe the course of Gods election, nor quench or diminish the least wise that may be, the loue of God, seeing that euen by our very sinnes he taketh occasion to shewe vs farre greater loue, he himselfe being vnchangeable, and his decrees euerlasting, so that it is not in mans power to chāge his decree, nor to make him goe away frō y^e which he hath once determined. And in deed, it were no meete thing for his vnchangeable nature, neither might it bee truly saide of him, that he lighteneth men to blinde them, or buildeth to pul down, or planteth to roote vp.

Of the true
marke of a
Christian.

Whereby now may euery man see that the spirite of God is the true marke of a Christian man, whereby he is knownen from all other,

of a Christian man.

other, and is of greater accompt then all other : not that Spirite whereby all creatures are susteined and haue their mouing by a generall strength and vertue which is common to all liuing creatures, neither that spirit, whereby we haue diuers and sundrie giftes bestowed seuerally vpon eche of vs, but the spirite of adoption and sanctification, which the Lorde giueth to none, but to the Christian man, when hee receiueth him into the number of his childzen and separateth him from all other, and sundzeth him from the worlde, to bring him to the hope of the euerlasting inheritance. This spirite, is for this cause called the Spirit of sanctification, whereby the image of God is imprinted in a Christian, and serueth him for an earnest penne of his saluation: and in deede putteth him in possessiō and a certaine enioying of his adoption, which is giuen him by a speciall grace of God, to bring that to passe by a secret working, which hee determined in his secret counsel to bring to passe in him, by his mightie hand, shewing himselfe to be a most gracious and louing father by his testimonie: a greater then which, and moze certaine, wee cannot desire, because the light and knowledge which he giueth, is accompanied with
such

Of the excellencie

Such a perswasion and certaintie of spirit, and with so steadfast and assured trust of heart in his goodnesse, that it maketh our vnderstanding surmount all things, clenseth and lifteth vp our hearts to heauen, and causeth vs to feele a spiritual taste of heauenly riches. And to be shor't, causeth a new byrth in him, and transfozmeth him: for this light which is in a Christian mans soule, differeth very much from al other light of knowledge, & from that kinde of faith which proceedeth from the perswasion of man. For it is impossible for mans wit, to giue man such vnderstanding of knowledge and faith as this is, which is wrought in him by the mightie working of the spirit of God: and is this in summe, that the Gospell which hath no appearance of wit nor strength, is notwithstanding a wisdom so high that it surmounteth the heauens, and is the mightie power of God to saluation to euery one that beleueth, to bring him to the kingdome of heauen: for in deed, what can there be more strange, more foolish, more simple, or more offensive to reason, then to heare a man say, that God is made and become a mortal man, that life was subiect to death, righteousness couered with a shewe of sinne, blessing subiect to curse, that by this meanes, men might be
ranso

of a Christian man.

ransomed from death, and made partakers of
blesse immortalitie, to the ende they might
obtaine life, & that iustice might reigne, sinne
being once abolished: and last of all to the end
that death it selfe and malediction might be
swallowed vp, and therefore, that we haue to
enter into glozie by ignominie, into felicitie
by miseries, and into life by death.

And mozeouer that this light is farre dif-
ferent from all other light of knowledge and
faith which proceedeth from the perswasion
of man, it is needlesse to alleage any other ex-
ample, then the example of that faith, which
is in the most part of the that beare the name
of Christians, & yet haue nothing but y bare
title, and beleue in Iesus Christ, because they
haue bene so learned & taught from father to
sonne, and are so perswaded, because they see
other men y liue wth them, beleue so: them espe-
cially whome they take to be the holiest, the
wisest, the most religious, and perswade the-
selues y their heads cannot erre: So that if
they had chanced to haue bene borne in any o-
ther countrie or religion, they would as easi-
ly haue bene perswaded to it as to that which
nowe they holde and are perswaded is true,
seeing their knowledge is gotten by reason
and discourse of man, not giuen of God and
from

Of the excellencie

from aboue, but cold, fleshy, weake, and very changeable which hath no other end but a peculiar respect of his owne, and nothing lesse then to be touched with the glorie of God. Neither doe they receiue Iesus Christ for such a one, as he is offred of God the father in the Gospell by a liuely faith proper to the elect, but while they professe his name, they spoyle him of his glorie, vertue, and dignitie, to transference it to creatures and mens inuentions in steade of the Creator.

The Christian cannot be knowne by the light of mans sense.

And therefore it followeth, that this man which we speake of, cannot be discerned from other by any iudgment of mans sense and reason, but by a spirituall iudgment by comparing spirituall things with spirituall things: for the Christian people are but a small flock, contemptible, scattred here one and there one in the thickest of a number that are falsely called the people of God and Christians, separate from the common order of men, and set apart as a treasure that God reserueth for himselfe, hidden and withdrawen from the sight and knowledge of men, as a few graines of cozne vnder a great deale of chaffe in a floore: so that it is not the reputation, nobilitie, greatnesse, wisdom, deuotion or other appearance y^e man esteemeth (be it neuer so glorious)

of a Christian man.

tious); which we haue to respect, as S. Paul
 willethe Corinth. to consider, that there
 are but a few called amongst them, a few
 wise, a few noble, a few mightie, and of au-
 thoritie aboue the flesh: neither haue we to
 respect the title, or outward profession, ne yet
 the outward signe of Baptisme, as it is writ-
 ten, All they that are of Israel, are not Israe-
 lites, nor all they Abrahams children, which
 are bozne of Abraham, although they haue all
 one selfsame marke, of Circumcision: but
 it is the marke of the Spirit of God, which
 we must haue regarde vnto, seeing that all
 signes and appearances, because they are
 onely without, are vnprouable, without the
 holy working of the inward, wherein truly
 consisteth the witnesse, whereby a Christian
 man may know himselfe. And the first effect
 of this inward vertue of God, is that which
 the Scripture calleth Adoption, which is
 not common to al the world, as Iesus Christ
 giueth vs to vnderstand, saying, That hee
 prayeth not the ffather for the world, but for
 them, whom the father hath giuen him, as it
 is said in another place, That the prayse of
 that adoption is not of men, but of God, ac-
 cording to his good pleasure and grace giuen
 in Christ, before the foundatiōs of the world
 were

The onely
 marke of
 the spirit of
 God cau-
 seth vs to
 knowe a
 Christian.

Of the excellencie

were layde. So that, euen as it is saide that Christ dwelleth in vs by the spirite of God, euen so doth man knowe and is knowen to be a Christian, by the fellowship of the same spirit, as by that marke wherewith the heavenly father sealeth and marketh the heart of his elect in assurance of their adoption, and whereby he knoweth them, whome he hath quickened from heauen by his most secreete vertue, which no sense of man is able to perceiue, being in it selfe very high and of great maiestie, & in outward appearance vile & beggerly, whereby euery Christian man hath such a conformitie with Christ, that as the world did not know him, so neither is he knowen to the world, for as much as y^e world which hath receiued nothing but the spirit of the world, hath no vnderstanding of those things which sauoz of y^e spirit of God. For, saith S. Paul, eue as no man knoweth y^e things that are in man, but only y^e spirit of man, eie it so no mā knoweth the things of God, but the spirit of God.

So then, a man can not iudge, no not of himselfe, whether he be a Christian or no, vni-lesse it be by the light of this spirite of God y^e is giuen him, as S. Iohn witnesseth speaking in the person of euery Christian, saying after this sort: Whereby we know y^e God dwel-

leth

How a
man may
know that
he is a
Christian.

of a Christian man.

leth in vs, euen by the holy Ghost whome he
 hath giuen vs. And this he sayeth vpon cer-
 taine knowledge, & not by gessing, according
 to that that S. Paul sayeth, That the same
 spirit beareth recorde with our spirit, that we
 are the children of God, and that it is not by
 the spirit of the worlde, but by the spirit of
 God, that we knowe those things which are
 giuen vs of God, to witte, our adoption, and
 hope of everlasting life, and moze, that we are
 able to saye and to saye truely, that they are
 none of Chyistes which haue not this inward
 witnesse of the spirit: and againe that they
 beare about them a witnesse & condemnation
 against themselves, which doubt whether
 they possesse Chyist and bee of his body or no,
 hauing no assurance by certaintie of faith, to
 be out of doubt and vpon sure ground both for
 this present and for the time to come, and
 such faith as Iesus Chyist assureth vs, that al
 that are his shall haue, saying in this wise to
 his Apostles, the spirit of trueth which the
 worlde cannot receiue, because it seeth him
 not, ne knoweth him, but you knowe him, for
 he dwelleth in you, and shalbe in you. And in
 deede freing that continuance is a necessary
 thing for saluation, what faith were it if it
 had not with it assurance and certaintie to

Faith is not
 without as-
 surance of
 continu-
 ance.

¶ ii

cont.

Of the excellencie

continue: Nowe the truerh is so; that whol
foerer hath the gift of faith to beleue; hath
also the gift of perseuerance to continue; con-
sidering that faith is not a perswasion for a
day, and a thing that sodenly vanissheth away;
but a steadfast and well rooted perswasion
the heart to continue al the life long, as Saint
Paul boasteth boldly in many places of his
election and perswadeth other to do the like,
vpon a glory which is not grounden vpon a-
ny thing that is in man, but in the goodnesse
of God, saying, That he knoweth, Whom he
beleueeth, and that he is one of them, whom
Christ came to saue, that he waiteth for the
Crowne of glorie, and is sure that nothing
can separate him from the loue of God in Je-
sus Christ, as one that was chosen before the
foundation of the worlde was layed. Which
thing fleshly men cannot doe, because they
knowe not what the spirite of God meaneth,
being not regenerate, and for that cause ha-
uing so base an heart, so vile, & abiect through
sinne, that they cannot perswade themselues
that God loued them so well, as to saue them
by the death of his onely and dearely beloued
Sonne: and that he was so liberall, as to giue
them paradise, vnlesse they deserue it by their
workes and merites, where as the regene-
rate

of a Christian man.

rate haue within them, such a feeling of the
loue of God in Christ, that they see them
selues out of doubt most assuredly saved in
him and cannot perswade themselves that
Christ to whom the father hath giuen all po-
wer to iudge, can pronounce sentence against
those his brethren and members, for whom he
died vpon the Crosse.

This Christian man hath a certaine know-
ledge by the effects which the same spirit of
God bringeth forth in him, that he hath this
gift of faith, for as soone as he causeth him
through his vertue and mightie working to
feele a peace and vnspeakeable rest in his con-
science, that appealeth, contenteth and satisfi-
eth it, he mainteineth him in a spirituall
ioy, increaseth the studie of good workes in
him, inflameth him in y^e loue of God, waketh
him delight in his word, & in the same worde
to beholde the face of God, gracious, louing,
and fauourable, with such an assurance of his
grace, that he reioyceth and triumpheth with
a bolde & chearefull countenance in the hope
of euerlasting glorie, in so much that he is
not afrayde to present himselfe before his
God, and call vpon him as his father, with
perfect assurance to obtaine at his handes
whatsoever is necessarie for him: which were

Man know-
eth himselfe
to be a
Christian
by the ef-
fectes of
Gods spirit
in him.

Of the excellencie

Impossible for him to do, if he were not moued
and enforced thereunto through some hea-
uenly and diuine working, which surmount-
eth all the force and strength that is or can
be in man. For from whence might this as-
surance of the good will of God proceede; and
that the man is colde and altogether sense-
lesse of himselfe, voyd of al motion or bent to
pray to him, could be moued to repayre vnto
him with such a confidence, & yet godly not-
withstanding, hauing grieuously offended
him, were it not through his deuine and hea-
uenly working: which the Christian man
may easily perceiue moreouer by this, that
it engendreth in him a loue of iustice, and
on the other side, a hatred of sinne, by an alte-
ration of affections, pleasures and displea-
sures for other then before, to witte, such as
are in all them, whose eyes the prince of this
worlde hath blinded. And yet notwithstan-
ding trueth it is that he feeleth a continuall
combat of the spirit and the flesh in himselfe,
which hindreth him from perfecting his
worke, but yet so it is, that though sin dwell
in him, yet it doeth not reigne in him. And
such are the effectes, whereby the Christian
man cometh to the experience and feeling
of his faith, & so consequently of his election.

of a Christian man.

For a Christian man striveth not to enter into the Sanctuarie of Gods wilddome to informe himselfe of Gods predestination, and secret counsell, as some rash headed and more bold then godly wise will needs intrude and thrust in themselves most arrogantly into the secretes of God, finding nothing in the ende, but a maze which they are neuer able to get out of: for neither is it meete that the height of the wisdom of God should bee subiect to the sense of man, to seeke it out euen to his euerlastingnesse. But the Christian being once come to the way of faith, and holding himselfe steadfastly there, is led from step to step, euē to the king of heauens chamber, as S. Augustine speaketh, there to behold the treasure of his Election, and yet for all that doeth not become thereby negligent and dissolute, but cleane contrary, doeth after that more diligently applie himselfe to God, to be his instrument of righteousnesse, continuing most reuerently to make his Election more steady and sure by good works, which God hath prepared for his Elect to walke in.

Man is not made negligent by knowing that he is chosen to life.

But we must vnderstande that this light which is in the children of God, whereby they haue this knowledge in themselves that

Of the excellencie

To know in
another
beside him
selfe, whe-
ther he be
a Christian
or no,

they are Christians, reacheth to no further
assurance then of themselves: for they are
not able to knowe assuredly of an other man
that that they knowe to be in themselves, by
reason of that hypocrisie that is naturally in
the heart of man, wholly disguised and sealed
with a thousand kinde of maskings, where-
with he deceiveth not onely other men, but
himselke also: and moreouer because this
priviledge of sounding mens hearts and know-
ing men within, belongeth properly to
God alone, who hath reserved to himselke
the knowledge of his, as he keepeth them
close vnder his seale, as Saint Paul saith, yea
at such time as when they doe not as yet ei-
ther knowe him, or themselves. Surely the
sight of man is too weake to enter so farre as
to iudge assuredly whether the seede of the
worde of God be rooted deepe enough in any
mans heart to remayne there. And to
the ende he should not rashly take so much
vpon him, God hath taken a good order for
it, warning vs daily by experience, how farre
his secret iudgments passe our capacities:
for oftentimes we see those men brought in
to the right waye, which seemed to vs to be
utterly cast away & lost children. As on the
other side, we see a number fall, which seemed
to

Of a Christian man.

to vs to stand very fast, being true, as S. Augustine saith, That according to the secret and hidden counsell of God, there are many sheepe without the Church, & many wolues withitt. And indeed there is in a number such a likelihoode and resemblaunce of a Christian, vnder a looke of hypocrisie, & they seeme to haue the selte same beginning and ground of faith, which the Christian hath, which causeth vs, that we can not iudge of them aright as we should. For mozeouer and beside that they haue the sellesame name that the other haue, and be likewise of the selte same company, make profession of one selte same doctrine, receiue the same Sacraments, they are sometimes touched with some tast of the worde of God, and doe reuerence it, yea and that so farre forth that they thinke it great impietie to contemne it and dispise it, and haue mozeouer such a tast of heavenly giftes, as the Apostle himselte witnesseth in the Epistle to the Hebrewes, that they seeme both to themselves & to other that see them, to be no lesse accounted of then the rest of the faithfull. And yet it falleth out so in the ende, that they shewe themselves to be nothing lesse then Christians, thus deceiuing themselves within themselves, because they can-

The hypocrisie of the false Christian hath great affinity with the true

not

Of the excellencie

not thoroughly examine themselves in their hearts, nor make good prooue of themselves whether Christ dwell in them or no, so full of vanitie is the heart of man.

The difference be-
tweene the
true and
counterfeit
Christian.

For thus it is, that the seede of the worde of God hath not life in them to continue and dwell there without corruption: though it seeme to haue taken roote in them, yet it is not liuely, so that, the taste which they get of the goodnesse of God, is but for a while, and yet that too very confused, and very irresolute: and in like sort, in that that God lighteneth their vnderstandings and maketh them know his grace, it is without ingrauing that true efficacie in them, which is imprinted in y^e Christians heart, which they neuer knewe, because they receiue not the vertue of the Spirit of God in deede, ne haue the true clearenesse of faith but onely to serue them for greater condemnation, and make them voyde of all excuse. And in that that God entereth into their heartes, it is to no other ende but that his bountie and trueth may be known to them by the spirit of vnderstanding, without further communicating with them, the Spirit of adoption. And this is the matter, why through want of ablenes to comprehend his vchangeable will, they cannot
con-

of a Christian man

constantly embrace his trueth to haue more
 then a light and fly knowledge of it, nor haue
 an earnest desire to loue God heartily as his
 childzen doe. Hereof it followeth, that a man
 can no more know certainly, whether an o-
 ther man be a true Christian or no, then he
 can in a ground sowed with diuers seedes,
 knowe one seede from another, which shall
 bring forth fruit & which shall not, yea though
 it haue already put forth, yea and that more
 is, though it be all eared. Wherefore euen
 as Solon said to Cresus King of Lydia, that
 no man is to be counted happie before his
 deathes day, because of many miseries & ca-
 lamities which may befall him: euen so I say,
 that no one man can know another man tho-
 rowly to be a Christian, (which is the grea-
 test felicitie that is) before the end of his race.
 And for this end and purpose Iesus the sonne
 of Sirach warneth vs to iudge of no man be-
 fore his death, because, sayeth he, that is the
 time wherein a man sheweth what he hath
 bene all his life long. For some shew euident
 tokens, that they were neuer other before
 God but Christians, though while they li-
 ued, they neuer made any shew of it: other
 some, y they were neuer Christians, though
 they made shewe of that profession of a great
 number

It is impos-
 sible to
 know a
 true Chri-
 stian before
 he die.

Of the excellencie

number of yeeres: for witnesse whereof, let vs take Iudas on the one side, and the thiefe that was hanged with Christ on the other. This is a point which we must alwayes haue recourse vnto, that such as God hath chosen to be true Christians, shalbe true Christians, what malice and vnbeliefe soeuer they bee presently giuen vnto: and they also on the other side, of whom he hath foreseene that they shalbe wicked and infidels, shall be such be they neuer so good and of a true profession at this instant: for he is a Christian alwayes, which hath bene foreknownen and appointed before from the beginning to bee a Christian.

A Christian
man may
be knowne
by the iudg-
ment of
charitie,
and how?

So then it appeareth that there is great difference betweene that iudgment which a Christian man may make of himselfe, and that iudgment which he can make of an other man, because the certaintie of faith remaineth shut vp within, and stretcheth not so farre as to be knowne in other, seeing that the Spirit of God beareth all the elect witnesse of their calling. But as for an other man, we knowe not howe to iudge of him, saue onely by the outward man, which is oftentimes very deceiueable. And yet notwithstanding by the iudgment of charitie

of a Christian man.

we may accompt him for a Christian, in
whom we finde, (so farre as the eye of man
is able to reach) the seede of the word, not
to be fruitlesse, that is to say, that the prea-
ching of the Gospel is not onely in word, but
in vertue of the holy Ghost, considering that
where we see the signes of Gods election as
we take them, there we have occasion to hope
well and not to fraude our neighbour of a
charitable, friendly, and loving iudgement.
For moreover, and beside that a he good na-
ture which ought to be in a Christian, leadeth
us to hope well of all men, S. Paul writing
to the Thessalonians, is so bold as to assure
them, that their election is of God, speaking
as it were upon a certaintie of knowledge
grounded upon notable signes and markes
of the vertue of the holy Ghost, which he say-
eth hee sawe in them, by euident effectes of
faith, the carefull and painefull charitie to-
wardes their neighbours, the sure hope and
steadfast continuance in wayting for the ma-
nifestation of Iesus Christ, with patience
which surmounteth all wearinesse both of the
length of time, and all afflictions of the
worlde whatsoever. The like he doth parti-
cularly in Timothies respect, to whome he
writeth, That he assureth himselfe that faith
and

Of the excellencie

and true religion dwelleth in him, iudging
so of the certaintie of the cause which is hid-
den to al men, by the apparant effectes therof,
euen as if it were visible. And so we in like
sorte, by a charitable iudgment, may iudge,
or at the least, perswade our selues wel of our
brethren, in whom we perceiue like frutes
and actions of the spirit of God, to take and
accomp't them for Christians. For as wee
iudge by the outward motions of the body,
that there is a soule in the body: so may we
perceiue by his workes whether the spirit of
God be in man or no, seeing that euen as the
soule which liueth not idle within mans bo-
dy, sheweth it selfe by that vertue and vigour
which it distributeth to the members, and to
eche part of the body: euen so the spirit of
God that is in man, is not idle, but sheweth
what power it is of, in the man in whome it
is: and sheweth it selfe effectually by a con-
formitie with Christ who liueth in him, and
giueth life to his members which he commu-
nicateth with them, and pow'reth out vpon
them by the vertue of his Spirit, which is,
as you would say, the generall soule of all the
chil dren of God, not respecting the substance,
but the grace: so that, euen as we thinke that
the grasse is well ioyned to the substance of
the

of a Christian man.

the tree which it is grafted into, when we see it bring forth fruite out of the same tree, by that strength which it receiueth of the same roote: euen so wee know that a man is truly ingrafted and made one body with Christ, when through one self same force of the spirit, he bringeth forth fruite in Christ.

But as for the knowledge of a reprobate man, it is a thing so secret and hidde to men, that they can neuer iudge of it certainly, vnlesse they haue some extraordinary reuelation: for be it y^e we finde neuer so euil signes and tokens in any man, what is he that can tell whether God hath reserved mercie for him in spite or no, vnto the latter ende of his life, though he haue spent it wholly in wickednes? Therefore seeing in deed it was not expedient nor meete for vs to haue knowledge to discern the one from the other, lest that thereby we should become too colde in charitie towards all, as we owe to all, as though all men were our brethren in Christ, it is sufficient that this chaffe shall bee separate from the coyne at the latter day. So then this onely remaineth, that we know distinctly and particularly, what the operations of the holy Ghost in man are, because there is no other way to knowe a Christian man

To know a
reprobate
man,

out-

Of the excellencie

outwardly by, but by them.

To knowe
a Christian
man by the
outwarde
effectes of
the holy
Ghost in
him.

And seeing it is so as we haue saide, that a Christian man, is a man made a newe creature as touching his nature, by a seconde birth, it is enident that that cannot be done vntil the first nature die, and this man put off the flesh, y^e is to say, his first nature which is corrupt, & that which we bring with vs from our mothers wombes, which is called the olde man. For he cannot in any wise be capable of the kingdome of heauen, vntil he be destroyed and brought to nought by the sword of the spirit, to the ende that death may make a riddance of all the operations of the flesh, which sinne worketh in him. For as long as we are Adams children, and nothing else but men, we are such slaves to sinne, that we can doe nothing but sinne, vntil we be made new men by the death of the first man, and haue passed by meanes of the communication of the death of Christ to the participation of his life. These two virtues, to wit, Mortification, and Vniuersation, which can not be separate the one from the other, are out of doubt the chiefest operations of the Holy Ghost in a Christian man: so that, euen as Christ died to destroy sinne, passing by death to euerlasting life, in that flesh which

Mortification and Sanctification, two of the chiefest effectes of the spirit of God in a Christian.

he

of a Christian man.

he tooke of vs : euen so this man is dead in
himselfe, and renued to a better life, accom-
panied with meete and conuenient workes
for it: & such as may witnesse that he is a true
member of Christ, by casting downe of him-
self, of his own wilddome & reason, and all his
affections and passions, which casting down
of himselfe proceedeth from a liuely taste and
feeling of the goodnesse of our heauenly Fa-
ther whereby man is knowen to be Gods
childe, and inheritor of all his blessings; for
this cannot be, but forthwith his vyle, base,
carnall and earthly affections vanish away &
become dead in him, by reason of the great
light of faith, which darkeneth and putteth
out all the false light of our corrupt nature.

Therefore a Christian man doeth then in
deede shew himselfe to be a right Christian,
when the death of Christ, which hath a cer-
taine force in it to expel and cast out the wic-
kednesse of our fleshe, and his resurrection,
whereby there is rayled by in vs the state and
condition of a better nature, shew their fruite
in him, as by Baptisme we are made parta-
kers of this grace. So that all knowledge of
Jesus Christ, that hath not this vertue to
follow it, is naked and bare, and all baptisme
without it vnprofitable and nothing worthe

Of the excellencie

for there cometh no man to Christ, or is receiued into the grace of Christ, but the efficacy of his death appeareth in him, and beareth about a shewe and token of it in him by mortification of the flesh, and quickening of the spirite; as hauing passed out of this first nature, into y nature of Christ by a spirituall renewing, which sheweth it selfe by framing the course of our life anew, wherein who so is foremost, sheweth that he hath profited most in the knowledge of God: And we may not thinke that the benefite of the death and resurrection of Iesus Christ belongeth to any other, saue onely to them which shew forth a new life, & of a right affection of heart, some sooner, some later, giue themselves to holynesse & cleannesse, wherein standeth the band of the coniunction that is betweene God and vs, and the certaine badge and marke of a Christian man, whereby the child:ren of God, as S. Iohn saith, are knowne from the children of the deuill.

Holines of
life is a
marke of a
Christian.

For which cause, Iesus Christ speaking of this sanctification to his Apostles, as of a true marke whereby his are knowne, saide, that it is the wedding garment, where by as by the bridegrooms cloth and liuery, those that are bidden to the marriage feast are knowne from
other

of a Christian man.

other. And the Apostle saith to the same purpose, that without this cleanness no man can see God, nor be ioyned to him, to cleave fast to him. And it is impossible for y^e spirit of adoption to be in one, but the spirit of sanctification must also needes be in him: for by it, it is that the faithful are called Saintes, are sanctified and made holy of God, consecrated & set apart from profane & common use, & separated from all earthly filthines & defiling of the flesh, as y^e vessels, garments, temples, & sweete smelling sacrifices were, which might not be applied to any other use, but that that was holy & dedicated to the glorie of God. For it is meete & they that are lightened with the doctrine of saluation, should shewe themselves an other sort of men, then they that walke after the vanitie of their owne braines, being ouercouered with darknes, because they neuer felt any light of truerth: so that to finde an holy man in deed (which is the Christian man) we need not seeke him in an hermitage or desert, or in some close place that is walled about, separate from the conuersation and common life of men, either in garments, meate, ceremonies, or what other obseruation soeuer of corruptible things, and other forme of holinesse inuented by men, with a kinde of wisdom

An holy
man,

Of the excellencie

In superstition and humblenesse of spirit, and contempt of the body vnder a cloake of fained obedience, pleasant in the eyes to many reason: but in the onely working of the holy Ghost, which transformeth soules into that holines which he hath himselfe, and frameth them in such wise to new thoughts and affections, that we may wel say, they are other then they were before, as wrought in his knowledge and to his image that made them.

Which thing appeareth not onely within through an inward and spirituall feeling of a pure conscience cleansed from wicked affections, assisted thereunto with a feare of God, and faith, and hope, and patience, and inuocation: but also without through a continuall exercise of godlinesse, boyd of all superstition, which might lessen or darken the glorie of God, by giving that to other which is proper to him: as also by peace & ioy of conscience, meekenes, goodness, vpright dealing, iustice, sobernesse, temperancie, and other fruites of the spirit, contrarie to the fruites of the flesh, which are, uncleannesse, filchines, idolatrie, sectes, heresies, dissolutenesse, enmities, seditions, outrages, murders, thestes, and other such like, which are contrarie to brotherly charitie, which Iesus Christ telleth vs, is

of a Christian man.

Another marke and token, whereby they that are his are marked and knowen to be his disciples: not onely by a common loue towards all men, as all men are one flesh, and all created and fashioned to the image of God, but also by a speciall and mutual loue the one towarde the other, so much the more straight and precise, by howe much the image of God shinech more clearely in them, whom he hath before regenerate.

Charitie a
marke of
Christians.

And therefore as by mortifying of himselfe, a Christian man forgetteth himselfe & whatsoever is about him, to liue in God, referring the partes of his life to him, as to their onely end, without further search of things that please himselfe, but such onely as please him, and as he well liketh of for the aduancement of his glorie: and so by this way and effect of mortification, he casteth off al consideration of himselfe, and layeth aside al fleshly affection to giue himself wholly to his neighbour, and preferreth the profite of his neighbour, before any respect of himselfe: So that this loue is an other maner of loue, then that naturall loue which is common to all men, which is nothing else, to speake truly, but a loue of our selues, accordingly as euery man is inclined to haue a care of himselfe, and so

A difference
betweene
Charitie &
the loue of
our selues.

Of the excellencie

to seeke his owne profite and game: neither is there any moze agreement between them; then is betweene fire and water, for the loue of our selues keepeth all our senses so well occupied, that this Christian and brotherly loue is wholly banished. And therefore S. Iohn sayeth plainly, That al they that haue a right feeling of it, knowe that they are passed from death to life, and they that haue no feeling of it remaine in death, that is to saye, they that are not regenerate.

And in deede, the bonde of perfection consisteth in loue, for loue is the marke and ende whereat the lawe shooteth, and wherein the ende of sanctification standeth, as whereby every one of vs hath to witnesse to the worlde, what loue we beare to God, whom we loue in our brethren. Considering that this loue is so toynd & coupled with the loue of God, that it can in no wise be separate from it, because it proceedeth from the loue of God, as the effect from the cause: and in this it is, to bee shorke wherein standeth the right rule of life, whereby the Christian man frameth all his actions, and moderateth the right vse of the giftes of God. And therefore whatsoeuer is not squared by it, is false, and all vertues be they neuer so excellent, are without it,

of a Christian man.

It, nothing else but a winde that puffeth men
by with pride and vanitie, and a vayne pain-
ting or vnprofitable sound, that is to saye, a
thing of nothing, and that more is, a stinking
and abhominable thing before God.

And therefore we must not thus thinke
of a Christian man, that he is a man with-
drawen aside from all other men, liuing in a
solitarie place, or so delicate to a contem-
platiue life, as they call it, as that thereby he
is distract from such actions of conuersation,
as are behoueable and necessary for the in-
tertainment of the societie of men: Seeing
that men are bozne one for another, to com-
municate one with another for the mainte-
nance of the societie of mankind, and not to
bereaue our neighbours of that duetie we
owe them, if we will not be taken for theeu-
es before God: Considering that we were not
placed here in this world, to liue solitarily as
wilde and brute beastes, but to liue amongst
companie, and to make other men partakers
of that which God hath bestowed vpon eche
of vs, and there is nothing wherein men are
said to followe God so much in, as in em-
ploying them selues charitably one for ano-
ther, for the profit of one an other, as in deede
that vertue is the best of all, that is profit-
able

A Chri-
stian man
withdraw-
eth not
himselfe
from doing

Of the excellencie

ble to the most.

The Christian man employeth himselfe to euery trade of life, both priuate and publique.

The priuate state.

Therefore the Christian, is a man that hath daily conuersation with other men, that applieth himselfe indifferently to all conditions and trades of life, whereunto he findeth himselfe rightly called, and therein employeth himselfe faithfully to the profit of the societie of mankind, whether it be in respect of a priuate life and the dealings thereunto belonging, or in regarde of the common weale, which is to be followed without his owne house : So that as a sonne he reuereth the dutie of obedience and subiection to his father and mother, and helpeth them as much as he can : as a seruant, he sheweth himselfe seruiceable to his master, & diligent to please him, as of a free and willing heart, seruing God and not man : as on the other side, if he be a master he entreateth his seruants gently, and is not too rigorous and churlishe towards them, hauing alwayes an eye to God, as to the Lord and Master of all: and if he be a father he bleth his children louingly and gently as is meete for their persons, trayneth by and frameth their liues in good manners : and last, if he be a husband, he reuereth that beneuolence, that is due unto his wife, for we may not thinke, that this man is of the

Of a Christian man.

the number of those, which forsake the remedie that God hath established for avoiding of fornication, and will needs upon an headiness overcome the necessitie of nature, rashly assuring themselves that God will helpe them, which he promiseth to none but to them that walke in his wayes, he giueth the gifte of continencie at all times to all men.

Moreover the order & frame of an household, is so well perceived in the house of a Christian, that he himselfe as Pastour of his familie, instructeth it diligently in the feare of God, and keepeth it in good and godlie discipline by continuall exercise in godlinesse. So that in his house, you shall finde the chaste wife, the shamed, plaine, and modest wife, decked without as she is within, no painted nor masked thing, rendering true obedience to her husband, and having an eye upon her familie, her servants, her children: the master, father, and husbande, every one in his degree employing himselfe sincerely in his vocation and office, approving his doings as before God.

And as for other offices & dealings, which are not household matters, and are without his house, as an inferiour and subject, he reuerenceth the higher powers, and submitteth him

The public
lique state

Of the excellencie

himselfe willingly to them, as to Gods ordi-
nances, whose minde is by this order, to go-
uerne the worlde and keepe the state of man-
kinde in peace and tranquillitie, payeth them
their tributes and dueties, and submitteth
himselfe freely and frankely to obey their
lawes and commaundements not onely for
necessities sake, because he cannot resist them
without danger of being punished for it, but
also for conscience sake, bound to doe it by the
word of God. He honoureth the ministers &
Pastours of the Church, as Gods messen-
gers, and sheweth himselfe ready and frame-
able to their teaching, frequenteth the holpe
assemblies, and vseth all meanes he can, that
are profitable to nourishe and maintaine the
seruice of God. And againe, as superiour and
placed in higher rōme aboue other, he hath
a care to execute his charge faithfully, to de-
fend the good, punish the wicked, as al power
and authoritie of man, is bound to serue the
commoditie and profite of the subiects. If he
be a Pastour, he ministreth the worde of God
faithfully, & marreth not the doctrine of sal-
uation, he keepeth it in his parisie, and in-
structeth the people both in gods doctrine &
in good example of life, and vsurpeth no rule
or violent and tyrannous Lordlines quer his
folowes

of a Christian man

followes not inferiours, but seeketh the com-
munitie and profite of all them that he hath
charge of.

So then the condition of all men is this,
that they are mutually bound one to an o-
ther, so that none of vs may exempt himselfe
from subiection, and therefore wheresoever
there is loue of one toward another, there is
also interchangeable seruice. The highest
Kings and Princes that are, are not exempt
from it, For God hath placed them in pree-
minence to serue as the members of the bo-
die, what preeminence and prerogatiue soe-
uer the one hath ouer the other, yet notwith-
standing serue one another, vsing such pow-
ers as God hath put in them, to the profite of
the whole body, receiuing no other commo-
ditie but that which ariseth of the profite of
the whole, and is pntred out vpon the whole
body.

And for this cause, the Christian man hath
his eyes alwayes bent vpon his vocation, as
vpon his principle and ground whereby to goe
winne himselfe aright, necessarie in all things,
to keepe the right waye, taketh heede he doe
not ambitiously and rashly take vpon him
many and sundry charges and offices toge-
ther, that he attempt not more then his call-
ing

Where
there is mu-
tual chari-
tie, there is
also mutual
seruitude.

The Chri-
stian los-
eth his
waye in
his calling

Of the excellencie

king will beare and meyleth not rashly with those things which do nothing concerne him, but contenteth himselfe with his present condition, whatsoeuer it bee, whether great or small, riche or poore, honourable or base, hee foloweth it, & continueth in it constantly, and passeth not his bounds, nor changeth it without iust cause. For his affections are ruled, and he brydleth his naturall & inordinate desires which couet commonly more then man hath, measuring his sufficiency by the wil of God which hee knoweth by that that befall-eth him: and taketh all as from him, and by his prouidence, whereunto he referreth the whole conduct of himselfe, and whatsoeuer concerneth him, so that he will doe nothing, nor take ought vpon him of his owne heade, but as a simple toole and instrument submit- teth himselfe to the conduct of his master and workeman, who is the Lord of all.

The Chri-
stian is con-
tent with
his state.

And therefore in what state soeuer he stande himselfe, either high or low, rich or poore, he beareth himselfe alwayes moderately and as it were, in an euen balance. Having abun- dance of riches, honours, and heavenly ble- ssings, plentifully bestowed vpon his soule, he easily leanieth himselfe to beate himselfe after one sorte in whatsoeuer state may be- fall

of a Christian man.

Call him in this present life, making nothing
to greate account of earthly and transitorie
things, as men commonly doe very vaine-
ly and foolishly. To be shorthe, the Christian
man, is a vessel of honour, sanctified to euery
good worke, and a man that walketh after
the spirit, and not after the flesh, and as Iesus
Christ sayth, that bringeth forth good things
out of the treasure of his heart and spirituall
vertue that is in him. For he is the good tree
which is known by his good fruite: it bea-
reth. And a man cladde with the garment of
light, that walketh honestly as at midday in
all mens eyes, being a patterne of good
workes, and a lampe lightened with the spi-
rit of God, that shineth in the darkenes of the
world by purenesse of life, in whom there is
not one piece or portion of his life, but yel-
deth a good and sweete sauitour of holines and loue
to the glorie of God, and profite of his neigh-
bour, whether we marke his talke, which is
poudered with salt, accordingly as the worde
of God dwelleth plentifully in him, and with
such a grace, that he is able to draw his hea-
rers by reason of the commoditie and profite
that commeth by his talke, eicher to his ma-
dest behauiour, being very meeke and graue,
or to his actions which tende to nothing but

The quali-
ties of a
Christian.

1010
1011
1012

Of the excellencie

to goodnes & honestie before men, labouring
by his good conuersation to edifie all men to
the aduancement of their saluation. And all
this he doeth, because he feeleth within him-
selfe, that he is called to so high a degree of
honour as to be the childe of God which mo-
ueth him with great earnestnes, and zeale of
spirit to do an infinite sort of good woorks to
the glorie of God, and to frame himselfe to be
manered and fashioned as becometh so high
a state as he is placed in.

And though these markes may seeme to
be sufficient to knowe a true Christian by,
yet notwithstanding beside those markes of
holinesse and charitie, there is the marke of
the crosse, farre more apparant and to be per-
ceiued in the sight of man, to teach vs more
plainely that the knowing of a Christian mi-
standeth in the mortification of the outward
man outwardly, as the former did in the in-
warde man. And yet both the one and the o-
ther procede out of one head, which is the
fellowship we haue with Christ, which can
not be separate fro the crosse. For this cause
the doctrine of the Gospell is called the way
of the crosse; because the worlde doeth for
the most part hate it, as the wisdom of man
is wholly contrary to the wisdom of God

Of the
marke of
the crosse.

of a Christian man.

the one seeking Gods glorie, the other, the
glozie of the flesh, which is so much the more
enemy to the first, because y^e light of the Gos-
pel discovereth the darknes of it, & the truth
of the Gospel maketh manifest and bringeth
to light the errours and lies of the flesh. And
because the world cannot endure it, and seeth
that it cannot maintaine it selfe in credit, by
y^e way of truth & peace, it striveth to doe it by
the way of lying, cogging, and violence, as it
is in deed a lier & murderer: so that they that
are accompted and taken for the wisest, the
discretest, of greatest power and holinesse, are
sometimes the first that bande themselves
against the trueth of God, as they that feeke
themselves most grieved. And therefore the
Iewes did more hainously a great deale per-
secute Chzist then the Gentiles, and amongst
them the Pharisees and high Priestes more
then the common people: and so at this day,
the chiefeest among the false Christians and
members of Antichzist, are enemies to Chzist,
more then other, so that the saying of S. Paul
is founde true in all times, That they which
are after the fleshe, alwayes persecute them,
that are after the spirite. For though they
doe not imprison all, nor banishe all, nor
confiscate all Christians goods, nor burne
all,

Of the excellencie

all, nor be head all, nor hang al, yet at the least
wise, there are fewe that scape their scoffes
and mockes, their reuiles and tauntes, their
gnashing of teeth and shaking their heads at
them. For this is a sure saying and worthe
to be receiued, that all that will liue faith-
fully in Iesus Christ, must suffer persecu-
tion.

The condi-
tion of the
Christian
isto beare
the crosse.

So that all the children of God haue this
condition layd vpon them, to beare the crosse
of Christ, as men appointed to it, by the will
of the heauenly Father, who hath decreed
this with himselfe to obserue this order and
meanes in gouerning his childre that he wil
exercise them in this life with diuers crosses:
and for that cause Iesus Christ himselfe the
elder brother was consecrate by afflictions,
and so entred into the preferment of saluati-
on. And so must all they that followe him,
beare the same liuerie and cognisance vpon
them, as he himselfe shewed plaine enough,
saying to his Apostles, No man can be saide
to be his disciple, but he that taketh vp his
crosse & followeth him. And in an other place,
That the children of God shalbe knowne
from other by this, that the worlde shall hate
them, as he was hated first. And in deede if
we looke vpon Abraham the paterne of our
faith,

of a Christian man.

faith, which is a sufficient example for vs, so that we neede not alleage any other, we may see that the promise of adoption was no sooner made him, but hee was by and by commaunded to depart from his house, and forsake his parentes, his owne countrie, and other commodities, to be a pilgrime and a stranger vpon the earth, subiect to a perpetuall kinde of crosse. And surely that man can not haue a certaine proofoe within himselfe, that he is a Christian, that is vnwilling to be subiect to this state and condicion, which the master and head, & Lord of al, was willingly subiect to, for vs all, and who is a liuely paterne for vs to follow.

Abraham
a paterne
of the Christians.

For the free adoption, wherein consisteth mens saluation, cannot be separate from Gods euerlasting decree, which hath made all his children subiect to beare the crosse: and because there shalbe none inheritour of heauen, which is not first made like to the only son of God. For as he hath the chiefest & best place amongst all the children of God, as amongst men, the eldest sonne beareth the name of the house: so is he appointed to be their paterne, by whom they must be framed as it were by line and square, to the ende they refuse nothing which he was subiect vnto: and that in

Conformitie to
Christ by
the crosse.

Of the excellencie

So doing, they may euery one in his place, be ioyned and coupled together with their head, who is placed in the highest degree, not onely to be aboue all, but also to holde all them that are coupled together with him vnder one self same marke of brotherhoode and honour. And as kings and princes of this world, haue their honours and prayles, wherewith they crowne the noble and valiant actes of their souldiers: so this soueraigne king and prince Iesus Christ honoureth the with his marks, whom he vseth in matters of great weight, to the ende they may appeare glorious with him aboue the rest.

A differēce
betweene
the crosse
of the chri-
stians, and
the worldly
crosses.

Hereby it appeareth, how farre this marke of the crosse which is proper to the Christians differeth from that which al the world tasteth of, seeing the case standeth so, that there is no man can say, y he is exempt from miserie, affliction, & trouble in this life. For where as the other which all men taste of, is a signe of y curse of God to y wicked, this crosse which is sanctified of God: is a signe of blessing, and wholesome for them that beare it, & therefore they should be deceiued that should thinke, y they wich suffer in this warfare against sin, should be thought to suffer for sinne, as the worldlings do in their sufferāces: cōsidering
that

of a Christian man,

that by this crosse, God procureth the saluation of his people, vsing it as an instrument & help fit for the aduancing of regeneration begun in them, both to beate down the foolish & vaine confidence of the flesh, and to breake in pieces the baile of hypocrisie, which is naturally in it, & also to brydle his intemperancie. For the whole nature of man is so prone to boast it selfe proudly & presumptuously of his vertue & sufficiencie, y it is needfull to shewe him his frailtie, as it were with the finger & before his eyes, to the end he may be humbled and brought to a more true and certayne knowledge of himselfe by a liuely feeling of his feeblenes, & learn to cal for strength from the Lord, as Ionas did, saying, I remembred the Lord when my soule was in anguish: and David, when I was in tribulation, I cryed to the Lord: for it fareth so with men, as it doeth with the sea, which would be infected and sink, if it were not troubled with the winds: so would men bee naught, if they were not sometimes tossed with afflictions.

God procureth our saluation by the crosse.

A comparison of man with the sea.

And therefore as the worldly crosse serueth the world for a wicnes of his condemnation, so this crosse being sanctified is an assurance and certaintie to the elect of their election, adoption, & fellowship they haue with Christ,

The crosse serueth for a certaintie of our election.

Of the excellencie

Iesus christ
suffereth in
his mem-
bers.

the rest of his afflictions being accomplished in them, as members and part of him. For as Christ suffered once in himselfe, so suffereth he daily in his members, as the head suffereth with the partes of the bodie. And so his members are made like to him by the same triall of obedience, with such a grace, that mozeouer and beside they are quite & exempt from those paines which all men deserue generally for their sinnes, they are honourably marked with the markes and badges of his sonne, for that the father appointed they should be afflicted for his name. And whereas he might by good reason haue made them suffer moze grievously, yea as shamefull thieues, murderers, robbers, and euill doers, he maketh the suffer as innocents, laying vpon them the person of his sonne, and causeth them to suffer for his sake.

God re-
keth no
pleasure in
the afflictions
of his,
but chastise-
th them
for their
progre.

And though notwithstanding al this, they be subiect to al miseries which al men taste of indifferently, both good and euil, yea & worse punished then other, insomuch that if a man would compare their afflictions with other mens, a man would thinke there were none so bad as they, and that God doeth (as a man would say) spare the wicked in comparison of his rigour which he sheweth toward his : yet
we

of a Christian man.

We may not thinke y^e God taketh a pleasure
in their torments, and as some prophane mē
say, that he maketh but a sport and pastime of
it whē he so afflicteth men, hauing cast of the
care and prouidence of mens affaires. But on
the contrarie side, because God iudgeth the
world aright, so that no man can escape his
handes without punishment, he moderateth
and compasseth his iudgments in such sort,
that he winketh at many lewde turnes which
the wicked commit, as though he saw them
not, and in the meane season correcteth his
chilozen, as soone as they make a fault, and
the reason is, because he hath a care of them to
bring them into the right way, purposing to
make his prouidence especially known in
the gouernement of his Church, and so vseth
his arme towarde it, that by the way he gi-
ueth vs to vnderstand, he hath a fatherly care
of vs, and prouideth for the saluation of his
Church.

And truely if amongst men there be no
father, of sounde and right iudgment, but
will chastice his chilozen, because without
correction he is not able to bring them to any
good point: howe shall God, who is a most
gracious & wise father forslacke a remedie
that is so necessary? Which notwithstanding

Of the excellencie

he vseth in such sorte, that whereas he punisheth and iudgeth the world, & sheweth himselfe a seuerer and angry iudg against the forward, he sheweth himselfe gracious & gentle towards his. For by this meanes, he meaneth to giue all men some litle taste of that which he wil shew plainly in the latter day, to wit, that he is the iudg of the world, & loueth iustice in deede, and hateth vniustice deadly, both to make the vnbeleeuers so much y more inexcusable, and also for the great profite and commoditie of the faithfull, to whom he protesteth, that he doth not punish them for any hatred he beareth them, but contrariwise because he loueth them, to amende them by afflictions which are the fruites of sinne, and cause them to runne more feruently to his grace, hauing once felt in the crosse what the anger of God is, so that whereas the wicked are ouerwhelmed with the feareful torments which they suffer, the Christian by being made partaker of the sanctification of Christ, thowhe the crosse, hath an entrance into the ioyes of heauen, & euerlasting life with him.

And by this way it is that God will proue euery mans faith, whether it be built vpon a sure rocke or no, whether the seed of the word be fallen vpon good ground, and whether the

doctrine

The prooue
of a Chri-
stian by the
crosse.

of a Christian man.

doctrīne of the Gospell which men haue re-
ceiued, be golde, siluer, and p̄cious stones,
or whether it be hay & stubble, which the fire
of tribulation consumeth and bringeth to
nought. For if we make so great accompt of
golde which is but a metal, that we will try
it in the fire, to make it please vs the better,
what maruaile is there, if God trie the faith
of his childezen after the same sorte, to the end
that when we are once well purged from the
dregges and filthe of incredulitie which re-
mayneth in vs, and are purified in the for-
nace of diuers afflictions, and so melted as it were
anewe, our faith may be of like accompt be-
foore him.

And surely it will be as easie to knowe a
Christian from an hypocrite by this triall of
affliction, as it is to know a piece of gold frō
a piece of brasse, when they come both to the
anvile, & to be stricken with the hammer: for
brasse will not be handled, but when it com-
meth to the beating, it breaketh, and maketh
a sharpe dinne and ykesome: and gold soun-
deth sweetely, & is plyable, you may stretche
it out both in length and breadth in thinne
and fine leaues as you list: euen so when an
hypocrite cometh betwene the anvile & the
hammer of affliction, he brasteth with impa-

Of the excellencie

The crosse
discouereth
the falle
Christian.

The profit
of the
crosse.

tience, he murmureth, cryeth out, and lamenteth in blasphemies against God: whereas the Christian prayseth God, giueth him thanks, and layeth out his heart, submitting himselfe willingly vnder the Lords hand that striketh him. Againe, by this exercise, God exerciseth the faithfull to contemne this life, & stirreth them vp, to thinke vpon and desire the life to come, by drawing them away by little & little, from the foolish and immoderate loue of this world, daseled with a vaine shew of fleshly & transitorie things: and moreouer to ioyne the together with his sonne in the fellowship of the crosse, that as he passed through a bottomlesse pit of miseries to enter into heavenly glorie, so should they also come thither by diuers tribulations, herein honouring them in making them suffer persecution for righteousness sake, that is to say, for the defense of his trueth against the lies of Satan, or to maintaine all iust causes, that they may be in like sort renowned as his sonne was here in this worlde, and through more sufferance of miseries wherein he maketh his giftes and graces appeare which he bestowed vpon the, be so much the more confirmed in that fellowship which they haue with him, to the ende they may be notorious for his glory, and profit

of a Christian man.

fit of his Church, which is by this meanes obediently gouerned.

But the chiefeſt thing that is to be conſidered in this point, and is indeede the choyeſt piece of Excellencie that is to be found in a Chriſtian that ſuffereth for Chriſts ſake, is this, that where all men are naturally afraid, & are ſad and penſiue when any aduerſities befall the, murmure againſt God, curſe their life, & fall out to banning againſt heauen and earth, deteſting their ſtate as miſerable, the Chriſtian very quietly & contentedly beareth patiently whatſoever befallerh him, not that he is ſo boyd of ſenſe, that he feeleth no grieſe, or affliction were not ſharpe and yꝛkſome to him, & very hard to beare, (for if it were otherwiſe, how could he be patient if he feele nothing) but becauſe the croſſe of Chriſt hath this propertie, that being accompanied with the vertue of y^e holy Ghoſt, which ſweetnerh the ſharpenelle & bitterneſſe of all afflictions, it engendꝛeth peace & meekeneſſe in the heart of the Chriſtian, and alſo thankelgiuing, for a ſingular benefit receiued of God & cauſerh him euen in the middes of the greateſt calamities & grieſes that may come vpon him, to haue a ioyful and mery heart, and receiue the for an eſpeciall cauſe of comfoꝛte, So y^e theſe
two

The excellencie of a Christian man appeareth vnder the croſſe,

Of the excellencie

two affectionous, which are ioy and sadnesse, great enemies the one to the other, come and meet so together, that the one is constraigned to giue place to the other, as the stronger and hauing the vpper hande : in so much that the ioy of the spirit which is incomprehensible, & as S. Paul sayeth, inexplicable, in that that it proceedeth from a taste of heauenly giftes, doeth in fine swallow vp as it were y sadnes and heauines. On the contrary side, they that haue no taste of those giftes, cannot chuse but at length be oppressed with sadnes, when aduersitie assaileth them, for so much as the sweet & louing yoke of Christ is too heauy a burden for them, because they cannot comprehend, how God our most louing and mercifull father giueth them power to suffer that which they doe suffer, to bring them to his blisse, whereas the Christian mounteth vp on high, and passeth the very heauens, & holdeth himself quiet and glad for the blisse of the inheritance to come, as though he had it in his bosome, committing himselfe for the rest to Gods direction and gouernement, as indeed it belongeth to the father, who is of right aboue al fathers. And so not measuring the punishments after the iudgment of the fleshe, but giuing honour to God, he acknowledge that

of a Christian man.

that he moderateth his punishments both discretely & wisely, so that there can be nothing found in them, but very good moderation, & such measure, that though through weaknes of reason he be not alwayes able to comprehend it, yet he hath sufficient to comfort himselfe, in that he knoweth that Gods iudgements are most iust and righteous.

To be short, euen as a man that passeth through a strong flood or streame on foote, least he stumble and fall downe, setteth his eye steadily vpon the firme lande which hee mindeth to attaine vnto, and marketh not the swift course of the water, and so goeth ouer safely and is nothing dismayed: so this man passing through the raging waues of present troubles, turneth away his sight, his thought, and all apprehension that he might otherwise haue of the miserie of them, and lifting vp his eyes to heauen, beholdeth there with a spiritual regarde the inestimable treasures of the heauenly inheritance, which he striueth to attaine vnto, and by this meanes easily surmounteth all horroz and feare of torments and griefes which commonly make alterations in mens heads, & casteth them headlong into desperation. So then he standeth surely settled & marcheth on without feare, & not so

onely

A fit comparison of the Christian passing thorow the miseries of this world.

Of the excellencie

The glory
of a Chri-
stian in the
crosse.

onely but leapeth for ioy, and reioyceth in his tribulations, & glorieth in the crosse which þe world accompteth shamefull & infamous, as in a thing which he esteemeth most precious and honourable, and moze full of maiestie then all the crownes and scepters, proude pompes and triumphes of all the kinges in the world, which the world wondzeth at: for he casteth his eyes vpon Iesus Christ, and beholdeth in him the glory of his sufferances, whereby he seeth himselfe glorified with him, and the reproche that commeth by him to become nothing. And indeede, who is he that will accompt that thing ignominious which is holy, yea and sanctified of God? Or who would despise that whereby the children of God are prepared to glorie which is so farre from being diminished in a Christian, thzogh the contemptible state of this present life, that it is rather augmented: And Moses for this cause thought the reproches which he suffered for Christs sake, greater riches, then all the treasures of Egypt.

The crosse
of Anti-
christ.

The crosse of Antichrist and of his members hath nothing like, it is harde, grievous and shamefull to beare. For in that they seek not to be iustified by Christ, they labour in vayne by going about to iustifie themselves,
and

Of a Christian man.

and shew themselves to be enemies to the crosse of Christ, striving to beare the mortification of the crosse by many foolish inventions, and withdrawing themselves into desart and inclosed places, vnprofitably punishing their bodies without faith, without Christ, without hope, and without charitie.

Thus the Christian man findeth combes of hony in the Lyons bellie, that is to say, ioye, gladnesse and glozy, in the deepest and greatest miseries that may be, and a quiet state in the gulfe of tempestes, as if he were in full blisse, and already rayled vp from death to life, and set in the heavenly places with Iesus Christ, in whom he possesseth euen from this instant euerlasting glorie and blisse, and obtaineth victorie against the rage of Satan, and al the force the world is able to vse: for to him is giuen to treade the Lyons vnder foote, and also the dragons, and al other hurtful power, because he marcheth vnder the ensigne of this valiant captaine which wil neuer lose any one of his, though he employ the and exercise them in continuall combats, giuing them this propriety, that who so continueth steadfast and constant in attayning to the glorie of his hope, shall in the end obtaine a good and blessed ende, where as the man
that

The excellencie of a Christian in affliction.

Of the excellencie

that is afrayde to make head & to set himselfe courageously against all that exalceyth it selfe as enemye against God, is not able to say that he hath a true hope in him.

And though the trueth be so, that there is not a weaker creature in the world then man is. subiect to the world, the flesh, & the deuill, and all his lustes, (though he had the wisdom of the Grecians, & strength of the Romanes, and vertue of the Philosophers, and righteousnesse of the Iewes in him) alwayes in feare, care, and horrour, & one that cannot resist the least tentation that may befall him: For he is but a shadow of vanitie, yea & vanitie it selfe: yet notwithstanding being regenerate in Iesus Christ, he is so strong & mighty, that though he cast of all worldly helpe & fauour, as Dauid put of his armour when he went to fight against Goliath, he doeth not only resist al assaults of the world, flesh, & the deuill valiantly, but also surmounteth all the enemies of God by the vertue of faith, which causeth vs to see by her light & all creatures are but fantasies and vaine fearebables, which haue no power, but as pleaseth God to giue the, whom we acknowledge to be our father, and one that hath such a singular and fatherly care of vs that he maketh all things serue

of a Christian man.

to our saluation: euen so much that this man being transformed into God by loue which suffereth al things, can no moze be ouercome then God himselſe, being ſure in danger, at quiet in torment, in pouertie rich, in ſickneſſe whole, quiet in perſecution, glorious in ignominie, bleſſed in miſerie, aliue in death, and therefore victoriorious and triumphant ouer all his enemies: for he that is borne of God, ſaſpeth S. Iohn, ouercommeth the world.

Hereby we may gather how falſely they brag & boalt of themſelues & they are Chriſtians, which will needs be exempt from this conditiō of the Chriſtians, as though it were poſſible to lay ſuch bold vpon Ieſus Chriſt as we ought, that we might embrace him, & let his croſſe go: & as though we might be members of his body, and not be partakers of his ſufferāces, which is but a meere & vaine imagination ſprung from hence, that we do not ſo rightly iudge of the benefit of adoption as we ought to do, but caſt away y^e grace which ſanctifieth vs to euerlaſting life. For the truth is ſo, that who ſo profeſſeth himſelf to be a chriſtiā & is aſhamed to follow Chriſt who goeth before him, doth nothing elſe but cut of himſelfe, as you would ſay, & diſauoweth himſelfe to be any of Gods Childre. For the Goſpel is neuer

He that
would ex-
empt him-
ſelfe from
the croſſe
abuſeth the
name of a
Chriſtian.

Of the excellencie

neuer without persecution, neither is there any way to come to the kingdome of heauen but by the crosse, though a man would neuer so much flatter and excuse himselfe, vnder a colour of weakenesse, which is nothing else, to speake as the trueth is in deede, but infidelitie, and a smal accompt that man maketh of the holy and sacred name of the Sonne of God. For certain it is that faith shal alwaies ouercome the world, but that cannot be done without fight. And he that for feare to confesse Gods name openly, alledgeth for himselfe, that yet notwithstanding God seeth his heart, sayeth true, because he can see nothing in him but infidelitie and hypocrisie, hauing nothing, to say the trueth, to turne him away from Christ, but onely because he appeareth with his crosse, disfigured and contemptible, and subiect to the reproches of the worlde, & calleth vs to be partakers of his afflictions. So that this kinde of men preferreth the glorie of this worlde, before the glorie & maiestie of Christ which is spirituall, and the ease and quietnesse of this life before euerlasting blisse: playing therein the part of Esops cock, which found a rich and precious pearle, and forooke it for a graine of cozne, so vile & abiect and base their heart is, voyde of all noble,

of a Christian man.

noblenesse and courage of a Christian heart, which surmounteth all visible things, as one of the houshold of God, yea his childe and heire, being assured that there is a better possession in heauen, then that which men seeke here vpon earth. But seeing the worlde is so brutish, and full of malice and ignorance, we need not maruaile, if we see the most part of men drawe backe and cowardly cast away their weapons, as soone as they see the standarde of the crosse set vp, as wee haue seene moze examples then were to be wished: and that of such, as at the beginning seemed to be valiant soldiers, which had neuer learned to warfare and fight against their enemies but with a certaine hautinesse of courage, which passeth away by and by, and not to possesse their soules in patience. These and such like are the apparant markes and signes of the holy Ghost in a Christian man, and his true ornaments and beautie that hath put on Iesus Christ, whereby he may be knowne from other.

Now that we haue in this sort spoken of the excellencie of this man, by marking and setting him forth in his colours, no man may thinke that I will take no man for a Christian, but him that hath these markes so perfect

A man isto
be taken
for a Chri-
stian, though
he haue
not attayn-
ned to a
perfection.

Of the excellencie

As though he were full of the holy Ghost, and renewed with such vprightnesse of life, as though he wanteth nothing. For if the case stood so, it were very harde to finde any such amongst men, for there hath neuer been man yet so perfect. For when we speake of a Christian man, as of a man y^e is truly renewed, and made spirituall, iust & without blame, we may not thinke that the worke of this making a new creature, is a worke done in a moment, or in a day, yea or perfected all his life long: as we may not also thinke, that it is a worke which is wrought equally in all: for it is a worke which God furdereth in processe of time by litle and litle, and as it were by degrees, according to the measure that it pleaseth him to giue to eche of vs vntill he hath brought it to perfection.

So that the spirit of God which is giuen to a Christian, doth so abolish the corruption of the flesh, that there remayne notwithstanding euen to death certaine reliques of the old man, but yet so that the holy Ghost in the end getteth the vpper band: for it cannot be, but he is the strongest wheresoeuer he is, and by the efficacie of his mouing, he holdeth men necessarilie in steady and continuall obedience of iustice, as the seede whereby he is regenerate

The worke
of regeneration is
not perfected in one
day.

How a christian man
is said to be
spirituall &
righteous

of a Christian man.

rate is incorruptible by meanes whereof, though this man y is so regenerate, abiderth notwithstanding in the flesh and sinne dwelleth in him: yet according to his better part, and in respect of the spirit that in the end ruleth in him, he is called spirituall, so y though there be at this present no such perfection in the world, but here may be some fault found with it, notwithstanding he is already counted as it were, inreprehensible, and without blame, who is regenerate and of a right heart tendeth to this marke. And I thought good to adde this point, to the ende that no man should discourage himselfe, though he feele not a perfect regeneration and crucifying of the flesh in himself, and a full & whole quickning of spirit, but lay that before him which I spake of before, as it were a patterne where he hath to forme and frame his life, shooting alwayes at the perfection, as at a marke which he must alwayes leuill at, considering how small a thing it is and of litle accompt to enter into the list of the Gospell, vnlesse we labour and strue to come to the end. For the chiefest wisdome of the best, is to draw on further and to goe on more and more, as the calling of a Christian man requireth: nay no man ought to thinke of himselfe that he hath

Of the excellencie

profited but smally, that can feele in himselfe
some signe and witnesse of that felowship he
hath with Christ in his death, and resurrecti-
on through newe motions of an vnfayned
heart, which striveth in deede to godlinesse of
life : considering that God of his free good-
nesse vouchsafeth that holy affection which he
himselfe planteth in the hearts of his seruants
this honour, that he taketh him for a Christi-
an, which is not so, as yet properly : for man
cannot come to this happinesse in this life, to
be cleane from al sinne, and to haue a fulnesse
of faith and pure charitie. And in that that a
man is taken to be a Christian, it is by reason
of the newnesse of life that is begunne in him
through the vertue of the holy Ghost, that by
his vertue quickneth him, until he be perfect-
ly renewed : which cannot be done before the
time that we shall haue put off the mortality
of these our bodies, and therewithall the filth
of sinne.

An admo-
nition to e-
very one
that hee
should well
examine
himselfe
whether he
bee truly
a Christian

And therefore let a man examine his life,
& sound his heart to the depth, to knowe whe-
ther he finde the markes of a Christian there
or no : and in case he doe finde them there, let
him be as thankfull to God as if he had recei-
ued the greatest benefit in the worlde, being
assured that his name is written in heauen.

And

of a Christian man.

And therefore let him with S. Iohn, skippe for
ioy, and cry out with Elyzabeth, and inlarge
his tongue with Zacharie, and magnifie the
Lord with the virgin Mary, for that it hath
pleased him to cast vpon him, being but a
worme of the earth, the eyes of his great mer-
cie, to make him taste such high things, so
rich and secret to the sence of man that there
is no eye can see them : and no eare can heare
them, nor heart and vnderstanding can com-
prehende them, and let that man knowe, that
this secreete was giuen him, to the ende he
should keepe this so great a benefite vnto
death, by increasing the same faith, whereby
he was receiued to be partaker of this bene-
fit: for it was the ende of a Christian mans
calling to goe on more and more in obedience
to godward, and to stroue without ceasing to
draw euery day more neare then other to him,
regarding on the one side the goodnesse of
God to them that continue, and on the other
side his seueritie on them, which abuse the
treasure and bountifulnesse of his grace, & if
on the other side, he cannot know in himself
he is a Christian chosen of God, let him sobbe
& sigh before his face; & pray to him to make
him partaker of his light & heauenly grace,
to the ende he may be out of doubt : for he
that

Of the excellencie

That mā is
ery blinde
hat can-
ot per-
wade him-
elfe hee is
Christian,

that doubteth, hath not as yet sufficient light,
in him, seeing the efficacie of the witness of
Gods Spirit is so cleere and certaine in his
heart in whom hee is, that as touching that
point, there is no doubt. But we may wel say
that that man is blinde, puerse and misera-
ble, that cannot perswade himselfe so much of
the goodnesse, mightie power and truethe of
God, as to beleue his promises which hee
hath made, and swozne and pronounced so
solemly: and therefore let every man strue
with himselfe to make his election sure
through a good conscience & sinceritie of life
answerable to the profession of his faith, and
labour by all meanes possible, that the
world may know in deede that it
is not in vayne that he per-
swadeth himselfe he is a
Christian.

FINIS.